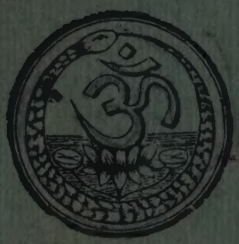
STORIES FROM YOGAVASISHTHA



SWAMI SIVANANDA

4 3 Mun. Church Road

The "Divine Life" Series No. II.

Mylapore

STORIES FROM YOGAVASISHTHA

(PART I)

ಪುಟ್ಟಣ್ಣ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ.....

By

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA SARASWATI

"ANANDA KUTIR"

Umiaiah Rao

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ-ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ-ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ:
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ
ಗ್ರಂಥಾಲಯ:
ಗ್ರಂಥಾಲಯ
ರಾಮರಾಜಪೇಟೆ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-೧೮

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ಪುಟ್ಟಣ್ಣ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ.....

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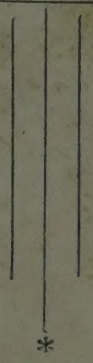

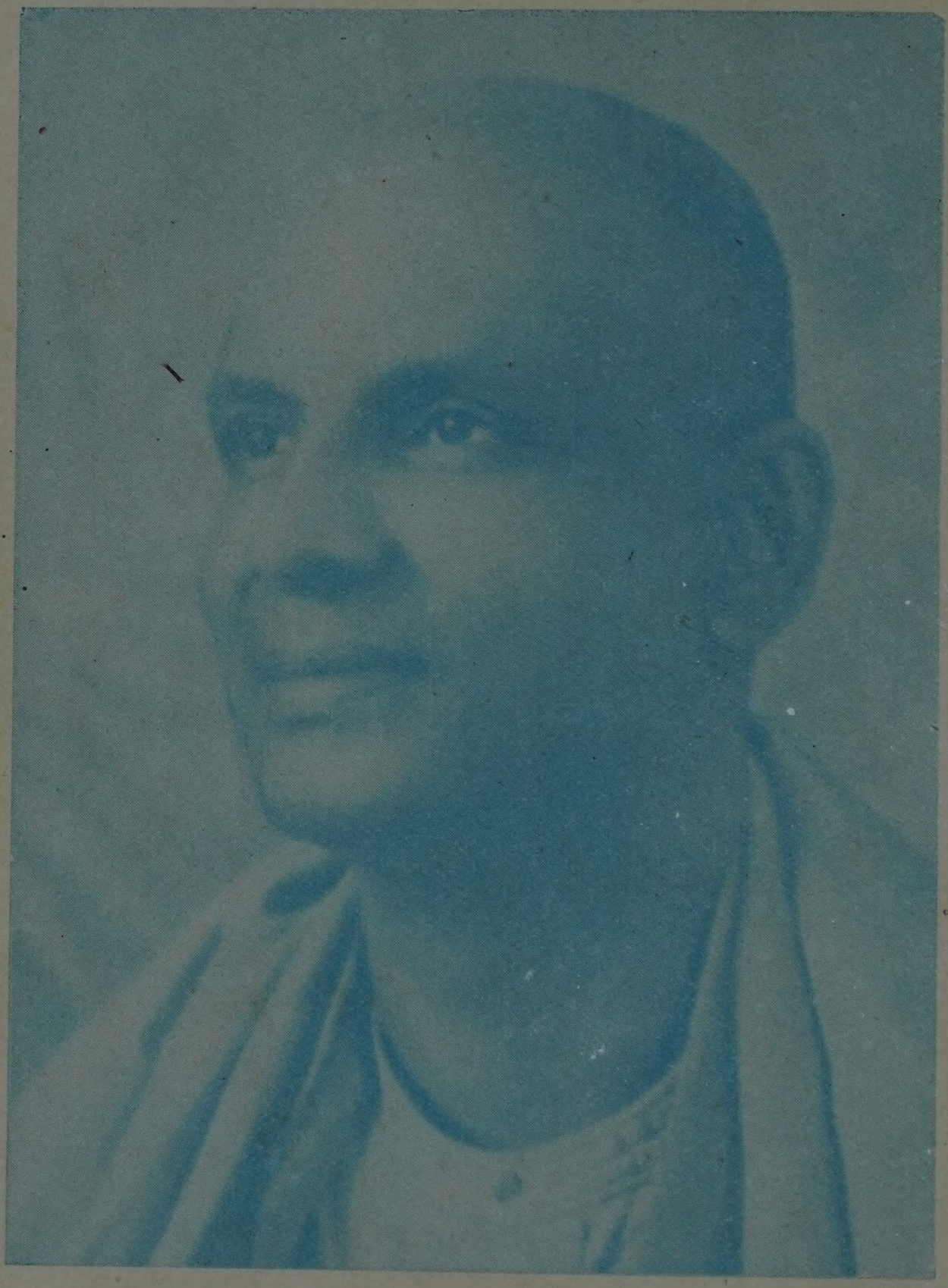

Vedanta is not the sole property of Sannyasins or recluses who live in forests or caves of the Himalayas.

—*Sivananda.*

TO

Sage Vasishtha

and

Maharishi Valmiki

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The present book "Stories from Yoga-Vasishtha" written by Swami Sivananda Saraswati Maharaj is the eleventh book in the "Divine Life" Series and this is the sixth book published by the Sivananda Publication League Calcutta. The other books "Ananda Lahari", "Practice of Brahmacharya", "Bhakti and Sankirtan", "Ten Upanishads" and "Lives of Saints" are now available to the public.

This book contains fifteen select stories from Yoga-Vasishtha. These stories have been so culled out as to give in a nutshell the gist of all the six Prakaranas of the Yoga-Vasishtha. The second part of this book will be published in due course.

The Sivananda Publication League is very thankful to the public for the warm reception accorded to the various publications of Sri Swamiji Maharaj.

CALCUTTA
1st December,
1941

KAIVALYANANDA
The S. P. League

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ANANDA KUTIR—MUNIKIRETI
(Via. RIKHIKESH)

ॐ

9th August 1941.

Beloved Jignasus,

Yoga-Vashista is a wonderful book in this world.

The non-dual Brahman alone exists. This world does not exist in the three periods of time. Knowledge of the Self alone will free one from the round of births and deaths.

Extinction of vasanas is Moksha. Mind generates this universe through Sankalpas.

Annihilate the little "I", vasanas and Sankalpas. Meditate on the Self and become a Jivan-mukta. This is the gist of Yoga-Vashista.

Sivananda

INTRODUCTION.

The Yoga-Vasishtha or Vasishtha Maha Ramayana is the earliest work of the highest order on Vedanta, in Sanskrit. It is a monumental work. It is one without a second in the Sanskrit literature. Vasishtha, the great sage, taught the principles of Vedanta to his royal pupil Rama, the victor of Ravana and hero of the epic Ramayana. He narrated beautiful interesting stories to illustrate the principles. The book is written in the language of Valmiki.

It is the crest jewel of all the works on Vedanta. It is a master-piece. A study of the book raises a man to the lofty heights of divine splendour and bliss. It is really a vast store of wisdom. Those who practise Atma-Chintana or Brahma Abhyasa or Vedantic meditation will find a priceless treasure in this marvellous book. He who studies the book with great interest and one-pointedness of mind cannot go without attaining Self-realisation. The practical hints on Sadhana are unique. Even the most worldly minded man will become dispassionate and will attain peace of mind, solace and consolation by study of this book.

The Yoga-Vasishtha Ramayana was once one of the most widely read books in India. It greatly influenced general philosophical thought. The late Pandit Brindawana Saraswati

of Benares had read the Yoga-Vasishtha one hundred and sixty-five times. It is a comprehensive, deep, systematic and literary philosophical work of ancient India.

The name Vasishtha is derived from the Sage Vasishtha. Though the book is called Yoga-Vasishtha, it treats of Gnana only. Practical Yoga is dealt with in two stories. The word Yoga is used in the title of this work in its generic sense. It is known by the name Gnana Vasishtham also.

Rishi Valmiki, the author of Ramayana compiled this remarkable book. He related the whole of Yoga-Vasishtha to Rishi Bharadwaja as it passed between Sri Rama and sage Vasishtha.

There are two books *viz.*, Brihat Yoga-Vasishtha and the Laghu Yoga-Vasishtha. The former is the big book. This contains 32,000 Granthas or Slokas or 64,000 lines. 'Brihat' means big. The latter book contains 6,000 Granthas. 'Laghu' means small.

Yoga-Vasishtha contains a system of ancient philosophical thought unique of its kind. This is a valuable heritage from the hoary past of this sacred land, Bharatavarsha or Aryavarta. The system of thought presented in this book is a highly valuable contribution not only to Indian philosophical thought but also to the philosophical thought of the whole world at large.

Those whose minds are turned from this world, who have become indifferent towards the objects of this world and who are thirsting for liberation will be really benefitted by a study of this precious book. They will find in this book a vast mine of knowledge and practical spiritual instructions for guidance in their daily life. Yoga-Vasishtha first enunciates a doctrine in its various aspects and then makes it very lucid through interesting stories. This is a book for constant study. It must be read and re-read and studied or re-studied as many times as possible.

Yoga-Vasishtha deals with the subject of effecting union of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul amidst all the trials and tribulations of life. It prescribes various directions for the union of the Jivatma and Paramatma.

The nature of Brahman or Sat and the methods to attain Self-realisation are vividly described in this book. The main enquiry regarding the final beatitude or *summom bonum* is beautifully dealt with. This book embodies in itself the science of Ontology, the knowledge of the Self, the principles of psychology, the science of emotions, the tenets of ethics and practical morality, discourses on theology etc. The philosophy of Yoga-Vasishtha is sublime and unique.

This book consists of six Prakaranas or sections *viz.*, 1. Vairagya Prakarana (dispassion or indifference ; 2. Mumukshu Prakarana

(longing for liberation); 3. Utpathi Prakarana (origin); 4. Sthiti Prakarana (preservation); 5. Upasanti Prakarana (quiescence) and 6. Nirvana Prakarana (liberation). According to Yoga-Vaishtha this world of experience with various objects, time, space and laws is a creation of mind *i.e.*, idea or Kalpana. Just as objects are created by the mind in the dream, so also everything is created by the mind in the waking state also. Expansion of the mind is Sankalpa. Sankalpa, through its power of differentiation generates this universe. Time and space are mental creation only. Through the play of the mind in objects nearness seems to be a great distance and *vice versa*. Through the force of the mind a Kalpa is regarded as a moment and *vice versa*. A moment of waking experience may be experienced as years in the dream. The mind can have the experience of miles within a short span and miles can also be experienced as a span only. Mind is not anything different and separate from Brahman. Brahman manifests itself as mind. Mind is endowed with creative power. Mind is the cause of bondage and liberation.

The doctrine of Drishti Srishtivada is expounded in Yoga-Vasishtha. In some places Vasishtha speaks of Ajativada of Gaudapadacharya, the great Guru of Sankaracharya. You begin to see and then there is creation. This is Drishti-srishti-vada. This world does not exist at all in the three periods of time. This is Ajati-vada or non-origin of the universe.

This is the most inspiring book. Every student of Vedanta keeps this book for constant study. It is a constant companion for a student in the path of Gnana Yoga. It is not a Prakriya Grantha. It does not deal with the Prakriyas or categories of Vedanta. Advanced students can only take this book for their study. Aspirants should first study Atma Bodha, Tattwa Bodha, Atmanatma Viveka of Sri Sankaracharya and Pancheekaran before they take up the study of Yoga-Vasishtha.

Moksha according to Yoga-Vasishtha is the attainment of essence of Bliss of Brahman through knowledge of the Self. Moksha is freedom from births and deaths. Moksha is the immaculate and imperishable seat of Brahman wherein there are neither Sankalpas nor Vasanas. The mind attains its quiescence here. The sum total of pleasures of the whole world is a mere drop when compared to the bliss of Moksha. That which is called Moksha is neither in Devaloka nor in Patala nor on earth. When all desires are destroyed, the extinction of the expansive mind alone is Moksha. Moksha has neither space nor time in itself ; nor is there in it any state external or internal. If the illusory idea of ' I ' or Ahamkara perishes, the end of thoughts which is Maya is Moksha. Extinction of all Vasanas constitutes Moksha. Sankalpa is only Samsara ; its annihilation is Moksha. It is only Sankalpa destroyed beyond resurrection that constitutes the immaculate Brahmic seat or

Moksha. Moksha is freedom from all sorts of pains and the attainment of supreme bliss (Sarva-dukkha Nivrittì and Paramananda Prapti). Dukkha means pain or suffering. Birth and death generate greatest pains. Freedom from births and deaths is freedom from all sorts of pains. Brahma Gnana or knowledge of the Self alone will give Moksha. Through the absence of desires for objects, the quiescence in the mind will produce Moksha. Moksha is not a thing to be achieved. It is already there. You are in reality not bound. You are ever pure and free. If you are really bound you can never become free. You will have to know that you are the Immortal, All-pervading Self. To know that is to become That. This is Moksha. This is the goal of life. This is the *summum bonum* of existence. That state of non-attraction of the mind, when neither 'I' nor any other self exists for it, and when it abandons the pleasures of the world, should be known as the path leading to Moksha.

The absolute according to Yoga-Vasishtha is Sat-Chit-Ananda Parabrahman who is non-dual, partless, infinite, self-luminous, changeless, and eternal. He is the ocean of Being in which we all live and move. He is beyond the reach of mind and the senses. He is the ultimate substance. He is the unity behind the subject and the object of experience. He is one homogeneous essence. He is all-pervading. He is beyond description. He is nameless,

colourless, odourless, tasteless, timeless, spaceless, deathless and birthless.

He whose mind is calm, who is endowed with the four means of salvation, who is free from defects and impurities can realise the Self intuitively through meditation. The scriptures and the spiritual preceptor cannot show us Brahman. They can only guide us and give us a hint by way of analogy and illustrations.

Shanti (quiescence of mind), Santosh (contentment), Sat-sanga (association with sages) and Vichara (Atmic enquiry) are the four sentinels who guard the gates of Moksha. If you make friendship with them you will easily enter the kingdom of Moksha. Even if you keep company with one of them he will surely introduce you to his other three companions.

The student should have an unshakable conviction that Brahman is the only reality, that everything is Brahman, that Brahman is the very self of all beings. Then he should realise this through direct cognition or intuition (Aparokshanubhava). This direct knowledge of Brahman alone is the means of liberation.

There is no difference between the waking and dream experiences. The waking state is a long dream. The dream experiences become unreal as soon as man comes back to his waking state. Even so the waking state becomes unreal for a sage who has attained self-realisation. For the man who dreams, his world is very real, the waking state becomes unreal.

A Jivanmukta roams about happily. He has neither attractions nor attachment. He has nothing to attain, nor has he anything to give up. He works for the well-being of the world. He is free from desires, egoism and greed. He is in solitude though he works in the busiest part of a city.

May you all drink the nectar of Yoga-Vasishtha! May you all taste the honey of wisdom of the Self and become Jivanmuktas in this very birth! May the blessings of Sri Vasishtha, Sri Valmiki and other Brahma Vidya Gurus be upon you all!! May you all partake of the essence of the Bliss of Brahman!!!

ANANDA KUTIR,
1st *November*, 1941.

Swami Sivananda

HASTAMALAKA STOTRA

Preface to the Stotra

Hastamalaka was born as the son of a Brahmin, Prabhakara by name, in the village called Sreebali in South India. He was very indifferent to all worldly affairs from his very boyhood. He behaved like one who was dumb and deaf. Once when Sri Sankaracharya visited this place with his followers, Prabhakara took his son Hastamalaka to him and fell at his feet. Sri Sankara lifted both the son and Prabhakara and when he questioned the Brahmin the latter said as follows :—

"O venerable sage! This son of mine is mute and indifferent to all affairs from his very boyhood. He is now thirteen years old. He understands none of our talks nor does he take any interest in them. He has studied neither any scripture nor the Vedas fit to be studied by a Brahmin. He knows not even the alphabets. With great difficulty I performed his *thread ceremony*. He never goes to play with his playmates. Observing his indifferent nature his friends sometimes beat him but he never becomes angry. Sometimes he takes food and at other times he does not. But he is happy and cheerful always. What is his dull state of mind due to? Pray, save my child!"

In reply, Sri Sankara put the following

questions to the boy. The reply given by the boy is incorporated in the Stotra named after the boy "Hastamalaka Stotra". He was neither mute nor dumb; he was a fully illumined Gnani and a Jivanmukta.

कस्त्वं शिशो ! कस्य कुतोसि गन्ता–
किं नाम ते त्व कुत आगतोऽसि ।
एतन्मयोक्तं वद चार्थक ! त्वं
मत्प्रीतये प्रीतिविवर्धनोऽसि ॥१॥

1. O Beloved child! Who art thou? Whose son art thou? Where do thou goest? What is thy name? Wherefrom do thou comest? For my sake please give me reply to the querries. Thou art very dear unto me.

नाऽहं मनुष्यो न च देवयक्षौ–
न ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियवैश्यशूद्राः ।
न ब्रह्मचारी न गृही वनस्थो–
भिक्षुर्न चाहं निजबोधरूपः ॥२॥

2. I am neither a man nor a Deva nor a Yaksha (super-human being); nor a Brahmin, nor a Kshatriya, nor a Vaishya nor a Sudra. I am neither a Brahmachari (celibate), nor a householder, nor a Vanaprasthi (one leading a forest life prior to renunciation) nor a Bhikshu (mendicant). I am myself the Eternal Self-knowledge.

निमित्तं मनश्चक्षुरादिं प्रवृत्तौ–

निरस्तारिवक्रोपाधिराकाशकल्पः ।

रविर्लोक चेष्टानिमित्तं यथा यः

स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥३॥

3. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge, free from the limiting adjuncts of ether etc., who induces the mind and the senses to function just as the sun induces people to do their various duties.

यमग्न्युष्णविन्नित्य बोधस्वरूपं

मनश्चक्षुरादीन्यबोधात्मकानि ।

प्रवर्तन्त आश्रित्य निष्कंपमेकं

स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥४॥

4. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge, the changeless, whose nature is pure consciousness just as the nature of fire is heat, depending upon which the gross mind and the senses perform their respective functions.

मुखाभासको दर्पणो दृश्यमानो–

मुखत्वात्पृथक्त्वेन नैवास्तु वस्तु ।

चिदाभासको धीषु जीवोऽपि तद्वत्

स नित्योपलब्धि स्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥५॥

5. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal

Self-knowledge. Just as the reflection of the face in the mirror is no other than the face itself, even so the Jiva is no other than Atman reflected in the Buddhi (intellect).

यथा दर्पणाभाव आभासहानौ–
मुखं विद्यते कल्पनाहीनमेकम् ।
तथा धीवियोगे निराभासको यः
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥६॥

6. I am Atman, embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge, Who exists even when the Buddhi (intellect) does not exist just as the face exists in the absence of the mirror and the reflection seen in it.

मनश्चक्षुरादेर्वियुक्तः स्वयं यो–
मनश्चक्षुरादेः मनश्चक्षुरादिः ।
मनश्चक्षुरादेरगम्य स्वरूपः,
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥७॥

7. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge, Who is beyond the mind and the senses, Who is the mind of the mind, eye of the eye, etc., and Who is not approachable by any of these.

य एको विभाति स्वतः शुद्धचेताः,
प्रकाशस्वरूपोऽपि नानेव धीषु ।
शरावोदकस्थो यथा भानुरेकः
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥८॥

8. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge, Who is ONE and shines by His own light; the One Who illumines various intellects just as the one sun is variously reflected in different pots of water.

यथाऽनेक चक्षुः प्रकाशोरवि र्न–
क्रमेण प्रकाशीकरोति प्रकाश्यम् ।
अनेका धियो यस्तथैकः प्रबोधः,
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥९॥

9. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge, Who illumines all the intellects at one and the same time like the sun which gives light to all eyes at a time and not one by one.

विवस्वत्प्रभातं यथारूपमक्षं—
प्रगृह्णाति ना भातमेवं विवस्वान् ।
यदाभात आभासयत्यक्षमेकः—
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥१०॥

10. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge, depending on Whose light the eyes get the power of seeing other objects just as at the rising of the sun we perceive outside objects and not otherwise.

यथा सूर्य राकोऽप्स्वनेकश्चलासु—
स्थिरास्वप्यनन्यद्विभाव्य स्वरूपः ।
चलासु प्रभिन्नः ससुधीष्वे राव
नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥११॥

11. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge, the One without a second, Who illumines the intellects both steady and unsteady, just as the one sun is seen reflected differently in both steady and unsteady waters.

घनच्छवन्नदृष्टिर्घनच्छवन्नमर्कं—

यथा निष्प्रभं मन्यते चातिमूढः ।

तथा बद्धवद्भाति यो मूढदृष्टेः

सनित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोहमात्मा ॥१२॥

12. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge Who appears to be bound to one of dull intellect just as the sun which is covered by the clouds is understood to be without brightness and lustre by the foolish.

समस्तेषु वस्तुष्वनुस्यूतमेकं—

समस्तानि वस्तूनि यं न स्पृशन्ति ।

वियद्वत्सदा शुद्धमच्छवस्वरूपः

सनित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥१३॥

13. I am Atman, the embodiment of Eternal Self-knowledge, Who is ever pure and untainted like the Akasa (ether), the one Self Who permeates all objects whom the objects cannot touch or taint by their contact.

उपाधौ यथा भेदता सन्मणीनां
तथा भेदता बुद्धिभेदेषु तेऽपि ।
यथा चन्द्रिकाणां जले चञ्चलत्वं
तथा चञ्चलत्वं तवापीह विष्णो ॥१४॥

14. Just as the difference between the various gems (precious stones) arises due to their peculiarities (in colour and shape), so also the Atma is seen separate by the difference of the Upadhi (limiting adjunct). Just as the moon is seen to be many and changing in the waters, in the same way, O Vishnu, thou appearest different (in different Upadhis). (In reality thou art one, ever pure and changeless).

PARA PUJA

अखण्डे सच्चिदानंदे
निर्विकल्पैक रूपिणी ।
स्थितेऽद्वितीय भावेस्मिन्
कथं पूजा विधीयते ॥१॥

1. How can worship be done of that Being Who is without parts, Who is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss absolute, and Who is without change (Vikalpa) and without duality ?

पूर्णस्यावाहनं कुत्त-
सर्वाधारस्य चासनं ।
स्वच्छस्य पाद्यमर्घ्यं च
शुद्धस्याचमनं कुतः ॥२॥

2. Where can one invite Him Who is All-full ? Which seat is to be offered to Him Who is the seat and support of all ? How is it possible to offer Arghya, Padya, and Achamana (purificatory Kriyas of worship performed with water) to one who is ever pure ?

निर्मलस्य कुतः स्नानं
वस्त्रं विश्वोदरस्य च ।
अगोत्रस्य त्ववर्णस्य,
कुतस्तस्यपवीतकम् ॥३॥

3. Bath is needless for one who is all-purity itself; of what use is clothing for Him in Whom the world itself exists? To one who is devoid of creed and clan where is the necessity for the sacred thread?

निर्लेपस्य कुतो गन्धो-
पुष्पं निर्वासनस्य च ।
निर्विशेषस्य का भूषा
कोऽलंकारो निराकृतेः ॥४॥

4. Of what use are incense and flowers to one who is ever pleased and is without desires for enjoyment? How can one dress Him who is without form? Of what avail are decorations to one who is without attributes?

निरंजनस्य किं धूपै-
र्दीपैर्वा सर्वसाक्षिणः ।
निजानन्दैक तृप्तस्य
नैवेद्यं किं भवेदिह ॥५॥

5. What purpose would Dhupa (sweet-smelling incense) serve to one who is spotless and with what one should offer lights to Him Who is himself the light of lights? What Naivedya (sacred rice offerings) can be offered unto Him who is ever self-contented and immersed in his own Bliss?

विश्वानन्दयितुस्तस्य—

किं तांबूलं प्रकल्प्यते ।

स्वयं प्रकाशश्चिद्रूपो—

योऽसावर्कादि भासकः ॥६॥

6. How can one offer Tambula (betel) unto Him Who imparts bliss to all beings, Who is consciousness and is self-luminous and Who imparts light to sun and other objects !

प्रदक्षिणाह्यनन्तस्य—

ह्यद्वयस्य कुतो नतिः ।

वेदवाक्यैरवेद्यस्य—

कुतस्तोत्रं विधीयते ॥७॥

7. How can one go around Him Who is endless ? How to prostrate unto Him Who is one and devoid of duality ? Of Him no praises are possible Whom the four Vedas themselves fail to amply describe.

स्वयं प्रकाशमानस्य

कुतो नीराजनं विभोः ।

अन्तर्बहिश्चपूर्णस्य—

कथमुद्वासनं भवेत् ॥८॥

8. How can Neerajanam (waving of camphor, etc.) be done unto Him Who is self-luminous, and how can one replace (Udwashan)

Him to His original seat who is All-full and All-pervading ?

रावमेव परा पूजा सर्वावस्थासु सर्वदा ।

एकबुद्ध्यातु देवेशे विधेया ब्रह्मवित्तमैः ॥९॥

9. This Para Puja should be done by all seekers of Brahman always and at all times with a devoted and one-pointed mind.

(*Note* :—Avahana, Asana, Padya, Arghya, etc., are the various acts of worship to personal gods according to rules of Upasana. The purport of the Stotra is that these are not possible to the one non-dual Brahman. The Supreme Self should be understood in the light of the above Stotra by all seekers of Brahman.)

ESSENCE OF YOGAVASISHTHA

If the four sentinels that wait at the gates of Moksha (salvation) *viz.*, Shanti (peace), Vichara (Atmic enquiry), Santosh (contentment) and Sat-sanga (association with the wise) be befriended then there will be no obstacle to the attainment of the final emancipation. Even if one of them be befriended, then he will introduce you to the rest of his companions.

If you attain knowledge of the Self or Brahma Gnana, you will be freed from the trammels of birth and death. All doubts will vanish and all Karmas will perish. It is through one's own efforts alone that the immortal, all-blissful Brahmic seat can be obtained.

The slayer of Atma is the mind only. The form of the mind is Sankalpas only. The true nature of the mind consists in the Vasanas. The actions of the mind alone are truly termed Karmas or actions. The universe is nothing but the mind manifesting as such only through the potency of Brahman. The mind contemplating on the body becomes the body itself and then enmeshed in it is afflicted by it.

The mind manifests itself as the external world in the shape of pains or pleasures. The mind subjectively is consciousness. Objectively it is this universe. The mind attains through

its enemy of discrimination the quiescent state of Para Brahman. The real bliss is that one which arises when the mind divested of all desires through the eternal Gnana, destroys its subtle form. The Sankalpas and Vasanas (subtle desires) which you generate enmesh you as in a net. The self-light of Para Brahman alone is, appearing as the mind or this universe.

The persons without Atmic enquiry will see as real this world which is nothing but of the nature of Sankalpa. The expansion of this mind alone is Sankalpa. Sankalpa, through its power of differentiation. generates this universe. Extinction of Sankalpas alone is Moksha.

The enemy of Atma is this impure mind only which is filled with excessive delusion and hosts of worldly thoughts. There is no other vessel on this earth to wade through the ocean of re-birth than the mastery of the antagonistic mind.

The original sprout of the painful Ahamkara with its tender stem of re-births at length ramifies itself everywhere with its long branches of ' mine ' and ' thine ' and yields its unripe fruits of death, disease, old age, pains and sorrows. This tree can be destroyed to its root by the fire of Gnana only.

All the heterogeneous visibles, perceived through the organs of sense are only unreal but that which is real is Para Brahman or the Supreme Soul.

If all objects which have an enchanting appearance become eye-sores and present the very reverse of the former feelings, then the mind is destroyed. All your properties are useless. All wealth land you in dangers. Non-desires will take you to the eternal blissful abode.

Destroy Vasanas and Sankalpas. Kill egoism. Annihilate this mind. Equip yourself with the four means. Meditate on the Pure, Immortal, All-pervading Self or Atma. Get knowledge of the Self and attain immortality, everlasting peace, eternal bliss, freedom and perfection.

VAIRAGYA PRAKARANA

" HARI OM "

Salutations to Satchidananda Para Brahman, from whom all beings proceed, by whom they are manifest, upon whom they depend, and in whom they become extinct in the end at the cosmic Pralaya.

Persons qualified to read this work called Yoga Vasishtha should neither be Agnanis, who are wholly sunk in the mire of Samsara nor those Jivanmuktas, or liberated sages who have already attained the knowledge of Atma, but only those who feel that they are under bondage and who long for attaining freedom from births and deaths.

Bharadwaja said, " O venerable Guru ! Relate to me first about Rama and then tell me how can I attain the final emancipation."

Valmiki replied, " O Bharadwaja ! Free yourself from births and deaths after meditating upon the path pointed by Vasishtha to Rama, who followed the valuable instructions of his Guru and attained Self-realisation."

Rama wanted to visit all the sacred places of pilgrimage. He got permission from his Guru and father and set out on his holy pilgrimage. He visited all holy places and returned back to Oudh. Rama had after all attained the fifteenth

year of his age. His body became gradually emaciated. His blooming face became pale. He sat silent and motionless in Padmasana, and remained absorbed in thought. He forgot to perform his daily duties. Dasaratha asked Rama repeatedly to tell him the cause for his grief and thoughtfulness but Rama did not give any answer.

At this juncture Viswamitra entered the council hall of the king. Dasaratha paid due respects to the Muni and said, "O Venerable Muni! Please tell me the object of your coming to me. I agree to part with any object you expect to receive from me." Whereupon Viswamitra said, "I am performing a great Yajna. The Rakshasas are troubling me very much. Please hand over to me your eldest son Rama. He will destroy all these terrible Rakshasas." Dasaratha replied, "Rama is very young. He will not be able to fight with the Rakshasas. I cannot bear his separation even for a moment. I am old. I am grieved very much."

Viswamitra became infuriated and said, "You gave me a definite promise to part with any object. Now you do not wish to keep to your promise. You are not a noble king." Then Vasishtha interposed and said to Dasaratha "O king, you must keep your promise. Muni Viswamitra will take care of Rama."

Dasaratha said to the attendants of Rama, "Bring here quickly my son Rama." The

attendants replied, "Ever since his return from pilgrimage, he is not doing his daily duties. He is averse to bath, food and good clothes. He says that his life is being spent in vain, and that this world is unreal. He is leading an ascetic life. The objects of this world have no attraction for him. He wishes to attain the Jivanmukta state wherein there are neither pains nor sorrows."

Vasishtha said to the attendants to bring Rama to the council hall. He then addressed the assembly, thus :—"Rama has developed Vairagya. He will soon attain the knowledge of Brahman and then perform all actions with great joy." Rama then appeared in the council hall and did prostrations to his Guru, Muni Viswamitra and his father. Viswamitra said to Rama, "Open your heart to me. What is the cause of your grief?" Rama replied, "O venerable Muni Viswamitra, I shall act accordingly. Please hear.

"This world is unreal. There is not even an iota of happiness in this world. Men are born to die, and they die to be born again. Therefore all are illusory in this world. I have developed discrimination. So I have discarded all thoughts of sensual enjoyments. One should know about the deceptive nature of the mind. It is the mind alone that pictures the existence of the world as a reality. Atma alone is real. I am quite disgusted with this illusory world. I am trying to find out a path which

will relieve me from the pains of this formidable Samsara. This thought consumes me like a wild fire.

Wealth

'Wealth cannot give happiness. It is a source of misery. It is transitory. It is never steady. It moves from one man to another. It begets evil. It tempts people like a deceptive mirage. It hardens the heart of man. It is obtained by all manner through evil means. It causes pride in man and makes him forget God.

Life

'This life is transitory. It is like a bubble. It is full of miseries, sorrows and troubles and yet the foolish, ignorant man clings to this mundane life. This body is a great burden. Life in this world is the abode of toil and misery. Death is incessantly staring at our faces. Various sorts of diseases do much havoc to this body. Youth abandons us quickly and old age with its weeknesses and decay of body overtakes us. He who practises ceaseless Atmic enquiry is leading a noble life. He who has freed himself from re-births through attainment of knowledge of the Self is really leading a true and noble life. The lives of others are like those of old asses. Thus there is nothing so worthless as this life, which is destitute of every good quality and ever subject to death, diseases, miseries and sorrows.

Ahamkara

'I am much afraid of this baneful egoism which generates actions, desires and pains, and which is the source of all evils. It is illusory. It deludes people. Though it is nothing, it is everything for the worldly people. It is associated with 'mine-ness'. It is born of Avidya or ignorance. It springs from false conceit. Vanity fosters it. It is the greatest enemy. If one renounces this dire Ahamkara, he will be happy. The secret of renunciation is renunciation of egoism. Ahamkara has its seat in the mind. It is under the influence of egoism that man commits evils and wrong actions. It is deep rooted. Anxieties and troubles proceed from egoism. Ahamkara is a veritable disease. Pride, lust, anger, delusion, greed, jealousy, love and hatred are the attendants of Ahamkara. Ahamkara destroys our virtues and peace of mind. It spreads the snare of affection to entrap us in it. He who is free from egoism is ever happy and peaceful. Desires multiply and expand on account of egoism. Our inveterate enemy of egoism has spread about us the enchantments of our wives, friends and children, whose spells it is hard to break. There is no enemy greater than egoism. O Muni of great wisdom! Bless me in order that I may free myself from this baneful egoism.

Mind

'This dire mind arises only through Ahamkara. This mischievous mind wanders

from one object to another like a strolling street dog. It is ever restless. It runs after the sensual enjoyments. It is of a fluctuating nature. It is ever entrapped in its evil desires. It is possible to drink the contents of the ocean, eradicate the Sumeru mountain to its root or swallow the burning fire, but it is impossible to control this terrible mind. This world is manifested on account of this mind only. All pains are generated through this mind only. If this mind is annihilated through discrimination and Atmic enquiry, all pains along with this world will vanish.

Desire

'Desire is the enemy of peace. It is like an owl that flies about in the region of our minds, under the darkness of our affections and in the night of our avarice. It destroys all our good qualities. Just as a bird is caught in a trap, so also I am caught in the trap of desires. The fire of desires has burnt me. Even a bath in nectar will not cool me. Desire is the cause for re-births and all sorts of pains, miseries and sorrows. It is like a sharp-pointed sword. It penetrates the hearts of persons and reduces them to nothing.

Body

'This body is composed of flesh, fat, bones, nerves, tendons, and blood. It is the abode of diseases. It is full of impurities. It has a

tendency to rot. Master egoism lives in this body with the mistress avarice. He has the ten mischievous cows of Indriyas or the senses. Mind is his servant. This body is like a bubble. It will pass away in no time. It is a bladder filled with air. It will burst at any time. It is like a pot of filth. It will break at any moment. The shining skin is subject to wrinkles in old age. Fie and shame on them who have mistaken this body for the immortal pure soul and rely on it for their happiness and peace. He who has faith in stability of the lightning and the city in the clouds will cling to this body as true.

Infancy

'The child is in a helpless condition. He cannot convey his ideas. He is mute. He eats dust and offal. He weeps for nothing. He is ignorant. This period is ever attended by dangers from fire, water, etc. He is easily irritable. How can senseless childhood be said to be a happy state of life?

Youth

'At this period of life the young man is a slave to lust. His mind is filled with evil thoughts. He commits various sorts of vices. His good qualities vanish. His face is disfigured by passion. The period of youth passes away quickly. The charm of youth fades away rapidly like lightning. The foolish man, who

ignorantly rejoices at his transient youth, is considered a human beast. He comes to repent of his folly in a short time. It is very rare to find a young man who is humble, who spends his time in the company and service of sages, who is sympathetic and merciful and who is endowed with virtuous qualities. Though he is well-versed in the study of scriptures yet he becomes a slave to passion. He, who has overcome all obstacles of youth and has attained knowledge of the Self while young, is fit to be adored by all. He is the truly wise man.

Lust

'What beauty is there in a woman whose body is composed of flesh, bones, nerves, fat, marrow, and blood? A woman is charming only for a short time. She is the cause of delusion. Where is the beauty in an old woman with wrinkled skin? Women are the flames of vice. They burn man as fire consumes straw. They burn from a long distance; and so they are more than fire. How soft dalliance destroys all manly energies and her caresses overpower the good sense of men! The lovely damsel is like a poisonous creeper that destroys life by causing lustful intoxication and destroying the power of discrimination. An ignorant, lustful man is caught by the bait of woman and dragged along by the thread of impure desire. This mysterious world began with woman and depends on women for its continuance. A woman

is the casket of all gems of vice. She is the cause of the chain of our everlasting misery. What shall I do with her breasts, her eyes, her loins, her eye-brows,—the substance of which is nothing but flesh, and which therefore is altogether unsubstantial ? If the lust of women vanishes, all worldly bondage will come to an end. How, without its renunciation, can I expect to attain the eternal bliss of Brahman. Damsels with dark eyes are so many traps set by Cupid, the God of desire, to ensnare the ignorant lustful men. The bodies of those handsome damsels, who are so much fondled by foolish men are taken to cemetry after their Prana departs. Beasts and worms feed upon their flesh, jackals tear out their skin and flesh. I do not wish to enjoy this illusory, transitory, sensual pleasure. I long only to attain that state of supreme bliss which will put an end to repeated re-births.

Old Age

'Old age withers the body and drives away its beauty. The old man is treated with contempt by the members of the family. He is in a helpless condition. His senses have become cold. He cannot gratify his desires. He has no good memory. He suffers from various incurable diseases. There is an insatiable desire for enjoyments but he has no capacity to enjoy them. Desires burn his heart; but he is powerless to gratify his desires. Death takes the grey head of a man

as a ripe pumpkin seasoned with the salt of old age, and devours it with great joy. Old age is irresistible in this world. What is the good of this miserable mundane life which is subject to decay and old age ?

Time

'Time is a rat that cuts off the thread of life in this universe. There is nothing in this world which the all-devouring time will spare. Time spares not even the greatest person for a moment. Time pervades all things. It has no perceptible feature of its own, except it is imperfectly known by the names of days, months, years and ages. Time, at the time of cosmic Pralaya will dance about with a long chain of the bones of the dead hanging from its neck to the feet. It assumes the formidable form of fire during the Pralaya and reduces the whole world to ashes. Nothing can stop its course. At the end of Pralaya it loses its own existence and merges itself into Eternity. After taking a short rest it reappears as the creator, preserver, destroyer and remembrancer of all. Thus time expands, preserves and finally destroys all things by way of sport.

'This mind wastes itself in the company of women. Then the body bends down under old age. Man grieves for his folly at the time of death. The body that is clothed to-day with silk and decorated with garlands is to be

burnt or thrown into a deep abyss tomorrow. The most deadly poison is no poison at all, but the sensual objects are the most virulent poison. The former takes away only one body but the latter annihilates many bodies in successive re-births. Life is uncertain here, as a bubble on water. Enjoyments are as unsteady as the lightning. The pleasures of youth are evanescent.

'Teach me, O venerable Muni! so that I may soon become devoid of grief, fear and worldly troubles and may have the light of Truth. Point out to me that eternal seat devoid of pains, weaknesses, doubt and delusion. Tell me, O sage! what is the state of life which is unassociated with the troubles incident to birth and death. Show me the way to attain everlasting peace, eternal bliss and immortality'."

Thus did Rama speak before the Munis who assembled in the Council Hall of Dasaratha.

THE STORY OF SUKADEBA

Viswamitra said, "O Rama! You are endowed with discrimination, dispassion, pure reason, intelligence and clear understanding. There is nothing more for you to learn. You have spiritual wisdom like that of Suka, the son of the great Vyasa. Though Suka has knowledge through intuition, yet he was in need of some instructions for confirmation of his spiritual experiences."

Rama said, "O venerable Muni! Please tell me as to how Suka who did not rest assured at first of his knowledge, came to be settled in his belief afterwards." Viswamitra said, "I shall relate to you, Rama, the story of Sukadeba, whose case was exactly like that of yours. He possessed spiritual wisdom. He reflected seriously over the illusory nature of this world like yourself and became indifferent to all its concerns. Though he was in possession of spiritual knowledge, yet he was unsettled in his mind. He had no strong convictions of the certainty of his knowledge; so he had no quiescence of mind. He went to his father and asked him for a solution of the following questions :—'Whence is this Maya that produces great pain? How does it subside? What is its cause? How far does it extend? Where does it end? When did this world originate?'

Vyasa explained to Suka clearly all that was to be said on the subject. Suka was not satisfied. He thought that he had already known all this. Vyasa asked his son to go to king Janaka for obtaining solutions of his questions. Suka went to the city of Videha. The gate-keeper informed the king of the arrival of Suka, the son of Vyasa, but Janaka did not go in advance to greet Suka as he wanted to test his equanimity of mind. Suka had to wait at the gate for seven days without food and yet his mind was not upset even a bit. Then he was detained in the outer compound for seven days more. Afterwards he was taken to the harem in the palace. Here he was sumptuously fed with delicious food and treated with flowers, scents and sandal-paste by handsome ladies. But Suka was quite indifferent. Neither those vexations nor these entertainments could affect the tenor of Suka's mind, which remained firm as a rock at the blasts of wind. King Janaka found out through these tests that Suka had attained the supreme Peace of the Eternal. He rose up, bowed down to the Brahmarshi and said, 'You have gained the object of life. You have obtained the highest fruit by abandoning all worldly concerns. Please tell me why you have come to me, now. I am ever ready to serve you, O Mahatman.'

Suka said, "How did Maya arise? How does it grow and how is it annihilated? Please, O venerable Guru, explain them to me in detail.'

Janaka spoke to him the same things which he had learned from his father Vyasa. Suka then said, "All this I have come to know long before through my own intuition and then from the answer given by my father to my querries. You have spoken the same thing and the same is found to be the true sense of the Shastras also. Not a bit of benefit is derived from this perishable Maya which takes its origin from Brahman in the form of breath or vibration and again merges itself in Brahman. Please enlighten me on the nature of Atma or Brahman."

King Janaka replied, " Brahman alone is. It is Imperishable, Indivisible and Self-luminous. It pervades as the All-full Chidakasa everywhere. There is nothing besides Brahman. That Gnana is bound by its own Sankalpa and freed by the annihilation of Sankalpas. You have truly cognised the Supreme Self. You have attained the knowledge of Atma. Therefore you have neither attachment nor longing for sensual objects. You have attained all that could be got. You have obtained whatever is obtainable. You are a hero as you have overcome all desires. You are a perfect Jivanmukta. You have become one with the Supreme Soul."

King Janaka initiated Suka into the Atmic mysteries. Suka remained silent with his mind fixed on the Supreme Self. All his doubts and perplexities vanished *in toto*. He

was freed from the delusion of Maya. He was in Nirvikalpa Samadhi for 1000 years. Just as a drop of water merges itself in the ocean, so also Suka merged himself in the Supreme Soul or ocean of bliss."

Viswamitra said : "O Rama ! You should also adopt the path followed by Suka. He who has attained knowledge of the Self will have a distaste for worldly enjoyments. He will not identify himself with the objects. It is very difficult to get aversion or distaste for the objects. If the mind is inclined towards objects, bondage is strengthened. If there is no inclination, bondage is loosened and it eventually perishes. Extinction of Vasanas alone is Moksha or final emancipation. The mind that thirsts for sensual objects through Vasanas leads to bondage. Those who have annihilated the Vasanas and who are indifferent to worldly enjoyments are liberated sages. Whatever Rama has come to know by his intuition, requires to be confirmed by Vasishtha for the peace of his mind. Let the venerable Vasishtha reason with the high minded Rama and restore the peace of his mind. He is the only person who is able to remove the doubts of Rama and make him peaceful and happy, because he is all-knowing."

Viswamitra said to Vasishtha, "You will remember, sir, the instructions, wise lectures and Gnana stories which were given to us by Brahman for pacifying our mutual enmity and promoting the welfare of all beings. These

things should be taught by you to Rama now. These will help him to attain peace of mind. He who is desireless and who has controlled his senses, will only be beneficial by the initiation of a preceptor. But the instruction given to a vicious student who is not disgusted with the world becomes as polluted as milk kept in a bag made of the hide of a dog."

All the sages who assembled in the Council Hall of Dasaratha eulogised Muni Viswamitra for his noble utterances.

Vasishtha said, " O sage, I will perform without fail what you have commanded me to do. Who can refuse to perform the behests of the good and the wise ? I will now recite to Rama the pure wisdom stories which were given out by the Lotus-born Brahma on the Nishada hills to the steady-minded, pure and virtuous persons in order to free them from the round of births and deaths.

Vasishtha next related the following stories to Rama for dispelling his doubts and to show him the state of Supreme Peace and Eternal Bliss.

MUMUKSHU PRAKARANA

" HARI OM "

An aspirant in the path of Vedanta or Gnana Yoga should possess the four-fold means or qualifications *viz.*, Viveka (discrimination between the real and the unreal), Vairagya (dispassion or indifference to sensual enjoyments herein and hereafter), Shad Sampat or the six-fold virtues or treasure *viz.*, Sama (serenity of mind), Dama (restraint of the senses), Uparati (renunciation of Karmas or satiety), Titiksha (endurance), Sraddha (regard and hence faith) and Samadhana (One-pointedness of mind), and Mumukshutwa (the longing for liberation.) In this chapter Mumukshutwa or the longing for salvation is dealt with.

Vasishtha said, " One can achieve anything in this world through right endeavours (Purushartha). He can overcome his misfortune. Endeavour in the direction of Atma-Gnana Shastras leads to Moksha. Endeavour in the direction of ordinary Shastras which treat of worldly wisdom leads to bondage. Those who are endowed with the four-fold means and other virtuous qualities, who keep company with the Sages, who study Atma-Gnana Shastras from their early boyhood, attain Moksha or liberation.

" Everyone should do right exertion and attain perfection by attending to the study of

Atma-Gnana books and the wise counsels of sages. Destiny is only a false notion rooted in the minds of the ignorant." Rama said, "The Vasanas of previous births prevent me from doing right exertion. O venerable guide! What then am I to do?"

Vasishtha replied, "O high-minded Raghava! The imperishable Brahman can be attained through one's own efforts only. There are two kinds of Vasanas *viz.*, the pure (Shubha) and the impure (Ashubha). The impure Vasanas generate re-births while the pure ones liberate one from re-births. Of these two, those Vasanas which were generated by one in his many lives will cling to him in his future births. If the pure Vasanas cling to him he will attain self-realisation; if the impure ones cling to him he will undergo pains and sufferings and take re-births again and again. O Rama! Abandon the impure Vasanas, cultivate the pure Vasanas and practise regular meditation on the Pure, All-pervading Brahman. If you increase the pure Vasanas, the impure ones will die by themselves. Follow the path chalked out by your Guru assiduously and meditate on the significance of the Mahavakyas or great sentences of the Upanishads till you attain full illumination. Free yourself from the longing for sensual objects and attain Eternal Bliss.

"O Rama! Hear my own story. Brahma created me out of his own Sankalpa like Himself. He blessed me with true knowledge

of Self. He ordered me, 'Go to Bharata-varsha in Jambudwipa and initiate men who are endowed with four-fold means into the mysteries of Brahma Gnana.'

"Four guards keep watch at the gate of Moksha (liberation). They are Shanti (peace), Vichara (Atmic enquiry), Santosha (contentment) and Sat Sanga (association with the wise). If you make friendship with these four sentinels, they shall open to you the door that leads to the abode of liberation. Even if you make intimate friendship with even one of them, he will introduce you to the other three. Attain Atma-Gnana through study of Atma-Gnana books, association with the sages and constant meditation on Brahman or the pure immortal self. Knowledge of the Self will put an end to re-births.

"He who is bitten by the serpent of Agnana will be cured by the Garuda Mantra called Gnana. When he attains knowledge, he will have perfect equanimity of mind. Even showers of arrows discharged at him will be like soft flowers, a bed of flames will be to him like a soft bed sprinkled with rose water. Atma-Gnana will dawn in a man only if he assimilates as one within himself the knowledge derived from the three sources *viz.*, his own self-experience, the real significance of the great sentences of the Upanishads and the instructions of a Guru. Persons who do not possess a sharp, subtle and pure intellect,

bold understanding and adamantine will, will not be benefited by the study of Atma-Gnana books. A bath in the Ganges, austerities and pilgrimage will only purify the heart but cannot help one to attain directly the immaculate Brahmic seat. It is only by means of one's best exertions and the fixing of his mind on the Supreme Self through constant and protracted meditation that the ultimate state of bliss can be attained.

Shanti (peace)

"When serenity of mind and calm repose of the heart is secured, all the senses also become calm and quiet. Everything is viewed in an equal light. This serenity of mind is attained by eradication of Vasanas. If one is established in serenity, nothing can upset his mind. He has always an unruffled mind. He will have a calm mind even when he is insulted, persecuted, assaulted or injured.

"Great sages and Rishis, having fortified themselves with the armour of peace, have still engaged themselves in the arduous affairs of the world with a peaceful mind.

"The ultimate bliss is born of and obtainable from the peace of mind. Thirsting for sensual pleasures is a protracted disease. This world is full of mirage. It is all parched and dry. Serenity alone can cool this dryness. It is peace that leads to all good. Nothing can bestow a happiness equal to that of Shanti.

A peaceful man experiences heart-felt joy and feels the benign influence of highest truth appearing of itself in his mind. He, who is endowed with this rare virtue, shines in this world like the glorious sun and attains easily salvation. Mayest thou too, O Rama, be endowed with Shanti or sweet peace !

Atma Vichara

" Atma Vichara dispels the cloud of ignorance and bestows knowledge of the Self. This is the only best medicine for the cure of the chronic disease of re-birth. It is your companion in times of danger, distress and troubles. Moksha is a fruit of the celestial plant of Atma Vichara. Atma Vichara destroys the Vasanas, thoughts, and the mind; helps you to differentiate causes from effects to reach the goal of life, and bestows eternal bliss. O high-minded Rama ! Enquire who am I ? Whence am I ? Whence came this mysterious universe ? Such an enquiry will destroy Agnana and confer knowledge of Self or Brahma Gnana which will give you salvation.

Santosha (contentment)

" Contentment is the chief good ; contentment is called the true enjoyment ; and the contented man, O thou destroyer of enemies, gets the best repose. For a man of contentment sovereignty of the world is no better than a bit of rotten straw. Enjoyments of

objects will become a poison to him. His mind is turned towards higher spiritual things and Atma Vichara. He derives happiness from within. He is never disturbed in adverse conditions. Contentment is the healer of all evils. It is a panacea for the cure of the dire disease—avarice or greed. The mind cooled by calm contentment is ever peaceful. Divine light can descend only on an aspirant who is endowed with contentment. A contented man though poor is an emperor of the whole world. A contented man is one who does not long after what he has not possessed, and enjoys what he has in right manner. He is quite satisfied with whatsoever he obtains without effort. He is quite magnanimous and graceful. Siddhis and fortune wait on him as if they are his servants. He is free from cares and anxieties. The sight of the calm countenance of a contented person gives delight to those who come in contact with him. Such a person is revered by the great Tapaswins and all great men.

Sat-Sanga

"Sat-sanga serves as a boat to cross this terrible ocean of Samsara. The company of sages even for a moment is highly beneficial. Even Darshan of Mahatmas destroys sins and elevates the mind. The company of virtuous people produces the fresh blossom of discrimination. The company of sages wards off all disasters and destroys the tree of ignorance. Sages prescribe the best rules of conduct for

aspirants and teach them the best mode of life. The company of the virtuous lends light to the right path, and destroys the internal darkness of man. The company of the sages is the unfailing means to conquer Maya and this dire mind.

"Contentment, Sat-sanga, enquiry and Shanti are the four-fold means of attaining self-realisation. Those who are in possession of these four-fold means have crossed the ocean of Samsara. Contentment is regarded as the best gain, good company as the right cause, enquiry as the true knowledge and Shanti as the highest bliss of man. All-prosperity and success attend on him who is possessed of these four-fold means. As soon as one of these virtues is developed, it will serve to weaken the force of the faults of your uncontrollable mind. The cultivation of virtues leads to the suppression and eradication of vices but the fostering of vice will, on the contrary, conduce to the increase of vices and suppression of virtuous qualities. The mind is a wilderness of errors, in which the stream of our desires is running with a tremendous force, amidst its two banks of good and evil wherein we stand.

"Therefore, O delight of Raghu's race, O long armed Rama, control your mind bravely and develop diligently the above four-fold means for your conduct in life.

"He who practises regularly Atmic enquiry will never be afflicted by the pains and miseries

of Samsara. He will have always equanimity of mind and equal vision. He will be ever peaceful and joyful. Maya will never approach him. He will ever engage himself in meditation on the Imperishable and Self-luminous Atma.

"One should study Atma-Gnana books, keep company with the Sages, develop the fourfold means and right conduct, control the senses, and ever engage himself in the practice of Atmic enquiry till knowledge of Self dawns in him.

"A Jivanmukta is perfectly desireless, 'I'-less, mine-less, fearless and anger-less. He beholds the Self only everywhere. He has equal vision (Samata). He has balanced mind (Samahita Chitta). He has no attachment, longings and cravings. His state is beyond description and yet he will move in the world like an ordinary man. He is ever calm and peaceful. He rests in the Turiya state. He identifies himself with the Pure, All-pervading Brahman. He is free from dualities, differences and distinctions.

"O valiant Rama! You can place confidence in the words of even a child, if they are consistent with the utterances of the Srutis, Guru's instructions and your own experience. Otherwise you should reject as straw the utterances of even Brahma Himself. Know, O undaunted Raghava, that various sorts of analogies are given in order to generate the knowledge of Self in you and describe the

nature of the Non-dual Brahmán or Supreme Being.

"Gnana and the above four good qualities exist side by side. They shine mutually on juxtaposition. Both these flourish well like a tank and the lotuses that grow in it. If both these are developed side by side, you will attain quickly self-realisation.

"O virtuous Rama! Please hear my stories which will dispel all your doubts, perplexities and delusion, and help you in the attainment of the final beatitude of life. He who hears these Gnana-stories and acts up to them will surely attain true renunciation, imperishable and inexhaustible spiritual wealth, eternal bliss, supreme peace, spiritual illumination and final emancipation (Moksha)."

UTPATHI PRAKARANA

THE STORY OF KARKATI

Vasishtha said, "Brahman is pure, Non-dual, All-pervading, All-full, Transcendent, Immaculate, Indescribable, Infinite and Absolute. The visible and the mutable world has sprung from the Invisible and Immutable Brahman. It is nothing but a diversity of Maya, the illusory power of Brahman. The Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman Itself manifests Itself as this universe. This world appears only through mind. It appears to be real through mind only. This world is like a long dream. The mind expands through Sankalpas and Vikalpas. The mind by its imagination stretches out this world which is as false as the Gandharva-nagar or the city in the clouds.

"The Jiva or the individual soul felt in himself the sense of his consciousness and by thinking, 'What am I' was conscious of his egoism. Ahamkara is generated through the Sankalpa of the mind. When two pieces of wood are rubbed, a little fire is generated. This little fire soon expands into a big flame. Even so the egoism in the Jiva expands through its variety of experiences of diverse objects. The little 'I' becomes stronger and stronger. The idea of 'mine-ness' becomes deep rooted.

"When there is lack of knowledge of the wooden post that is lying on the roadside in a

dark night, the idea of thief in the post arises. Even so when there is absence of knowledge that all is Brahman or the Self, the idea of the reality of the universe is generated. There is no difference between Jiva and Brahman in essence. When the Upadhi of Avidya is removed, Jiva becomes identical with Brahman, just as the pot-ether becomes one with the universal ether, when the Upadhi pot is broken. There is no difference also between the mind and the universe.

"O Rama! I shall relate to you now a very interesting story of a powerful Rakshasi who put many intelligent questions for solution. This will relieve you from all your doubts.

"There lived on the northern slopes of the Himalayas a Rakshasi by the name of Karkati (a crooked crab). She was as dark as ink and stalwart as a rock with limbs as strong as could split the sturdy Oka. She had large mouth and crescent teeth. Her eye balls were as blazing as fire. Her two thighs were like the big date trees. Her loud laughter was like thunder. Her sharp hooked nails were of adamantine density.

"Nothing could ever satiate the insatiable hunger of this big bellied monstress. Even if all the creatures of Jambudwipa fell a prey to her large stomach, she would yet find them a scanty meal only. She went to the Himalyas and performed rigorous Tapas. She took a bath and stood on one leg on the ground and concentrated her eyes upon the sun. She did

Tapas for one thousand years. She exposed her huge body to the rigor of heat and cold.

"After the lapse of thousand years, Brahma appeared before her. She made prostrations to Him mentally. She thought within herself thus, 'If I become an iron-like Jiva-suchika (living needle), I can enter into the bodies of all in the world and consume as much food as I require. I will suck the blood of all beings to my heart's satisfaction and will appease my ever-increasing fire of hunger.' As she was thinking in this manner, Brahma said, 'O Karkati, I am pleased with your devotion. I will grant you the boon you want. Even wicked persons can get anything through performance of rigorous Tapas.

"Karkati said, 'Let me become a Jiva-Suchika, a living needle.'

"Brahma said, 'Be it so. Thou shalt become Suchika having the prefix **VI** attached to thy name and hence be called Visuchika. Thou shalt afflict those who take unwholesome food, who are intemperate, who are wicked and who dwell in insanitary places. Thou shalt be of the form of wind in the bowels and cause bile, flatulence, intestinal colic, enlargement of spleen and cholera (Visuchika).'

So saying Brahma disappeared. Karkati assumed the form of a Jiva-Suchika and entered the bodies of all beings and fed upon their blood. She was quite satisfied. Her hunger was gratified. She reflected within

herself, ' I have afflicted many persons in vain. I have a very cruel heart. I do not wish to lead such a life. I will again perform Tapas and attain knowledge.' She did Tapas again in the Himalayas for one thousand years. She became cleansed of the dross of her sins. She was free from love and hatred. Gnana dawned in her mind. She gained the light of knowledge. She came to know the truly knowable. She felt true bliss in her soul. Brahma came voluntarily to her and said, 'O Karkati ! You have attained illumination. You have become a Jivanmukta. Remain in your old form of a Rakshasa woman. Support yourself in the bodies of persons who are without knowledge of Atma, also who are cruel and wicked. Go to the ignorant and enlighten them with the knowledge thou hast gained ; for it is the nature of the good and the great to deliver the ignorant from their error. Whosoever will not receive this knowledge when it is imparted to him by thee, take him as the proper food for thee.' So saying Brahma disappeared.

" She meditated on the Non-dual Brahman and remained in Nirvikalpa Samadhi for a very long time. As soon as she returned to the normal state, she experienced the pains of hunger. Body never forsakes its Dharmas or appetites so long as it lasts in the same state. She thought that the killing of animals for food was sinful. She went to the slopes of the Himalayas and reached the country of the hunters. She thought that she would consume

the body of the ignorant in accordance with the instructions of Brahma. At the dead of night she saw a king and his minister wandering together in the forest. The name of the king was Vikrama. Karkati was glad to think that she had at last got her proper food. She wanted to test them as to whether they were Gnanis or not.

"She roared and said, 'Who are you? Are you sages or ignorant men? You have become an easy prey to me and must meet your fate at my hands in a moment.' The king replied, 'O thou demon! Do not brag too much. Show us your prowess at once. What do you really want? Ignorant persons only long after fruits of their actions. Wise persons always perform virtuous actions without expectation of fruits. We can blow away wicked persons as yourself like mosquitoes. We are able to give even in dream any object to any person. The wise man performs actions with a calm mind assisted by reason and practical wisdom.'

"Karkati thought that they were wise persons. She reflected within herself thus: 'These people are not men of the ordinary kind. A pure wise man can be judged through his speech, face and eyes. His inner soul is expressed in the outward gestures of his face and eyes and in the tone and tenor of his speech. The words, the face and the eyes are expressive of the inward thoughts of the wise. These go together like the salt and water of

the sea. The mind, the word and the action of the wise will all agree, but those of fools disagree in all the three. They cannot be destroyed by me when they are indestructible by their knowledge and moral excellence. They are acquainted with spiritual knowledge without which there cannot be a good understanding. Knowledge of the indestructibility of the soul removes the fear of death.'

"She said, 'Tell me, O ye sinless men, who are so brave and valiant, who you are and whence you come.' The minister replied, 'This is the king of the Kiratas and I am his minister. We do patrol at night everywhere to protect the virtuous and punish the wicked'. Karkati said, 'A good king, too, becomes a wicked man by hearing the counsels of a bad minister; even a wicked king becomes a virtuous man if he hears the wise counsels of a virtuous minister. Conversely, a wise and virtuous king produces a virtuous minister, a wicked king a bad minister. If a virtuous king receives the wise counsels of a wise and virtuous minister, he can achieve anything in the three worlds. As is the king, so will be his subjects. Those who have spiritual knowledge, who possess equal vision and knowledge of Atma Gnana books and who are noble and magnanimous, are fit to become kings and ministers. I will put to you a series of questions on philosophy. If you are able to give suitable answers you can have a seat on my head like flowers. Otherwise you both will fall a prey to my

stomach. I will have a very good meal. You both will serve as fuel for the gastric fire blazing in my stomach.'

"The king said, 'O Karkati! Now tell me your questions. I will answer them properly'."

Vasishtha said, "O Lotus-eyed Rama! Listen attentively to the questions put by the Rakshasa woman. They are the following :—

1. What is that atom which is the cause of the origin, preservation and destruction of the innumerable worlds that spring up like so many bubbles on the surface of the sea ?

2. What is that which is Akasa and yet is not ?

3. What is that which though unlimited has yet a limit ?

4. What is that which though moving yet moves not ?

5. What is that which though it is yet is not ?

6. What is that which manifests as Chit (consciousness or intelligence) and is yet as inert as a stone ?

7. What is that which draws pictures in the Akasa ?

8. What is that atom in which are latent all the macrocosms like a tree in the seed ?

9. Whence do all things take their origin like foam in the sea ?

10. And in what will they get merged ?'

"The minister replied, 'Hear me; O woman with dark complexion.

'Question No. 1.—All your questions relate to the Supreme Non-dual Brahman, which is beyond the reach of mind and the five senses and which is more subtle than Akasa. It is the atom of atoms. It is absolute consciousness. It is illimitable knowledge.

'Question No. 2.—Brahman or the Supreme Self is All-pervading, and subtle. It is without support (Niralambam). It has neither interior nor exterior. Akasa also is all-pervading and subtle. It is without support. It has neither interior nor exterior. Therefore Brahman can be said to be Akasa itself. (Generally Brahman is compared to Akasa. But this is a poor comparison. Brahman can be compared to Brahman only). But yet it is not Akasa, as it is pure consciousness or intelligence itself. Akasa is inert. It is a product of Maya.

'Question No. 3.—Brahman shines in His own glory. It has no resting place. It is beyond time, space and causation. It is All-pervading. It is Indivisible and Infinite. It has no dwelling place. Hence it is not limited and yet it abides in all beings for ever as their Inner Soul or as the Absolute Sat.

'Question No. 4.—Brahman is Immovable (Achala) as it has no space outside of itself to move. He is All-full (Paripoorna). Through

its relationship with the body and many objects it moves about.

'Question No. 5.—Brahman is Absolute Sat or Absolute Existence. Brahman alone exists. Therefore it is. It cannot be seen by the naked eye. Worldly minded people deny Its existence. You cannot point out 'This is Brahman.' Therefore It is not.

'Question No. 6.—Brahman is Absolute consciousness. It is Self-luminous. It is Light of lights. Brahman Itself manifests as stone, earth, iron and other inert or insentient objects. It has two aspects of consciousness and matter. Matter is inert. Spirit is pure consciousness.

'Question No. 7.—This is It that paints the pictures of the series of universes in the Chidakasa which is very subtle, self-existent and spotless.

'Question Nos. 8, 9 & 10.—The diverse worlds have come out of Brahman. They exist in Brahman and eventually dissolve in Brahman like bubbles in the ocean. The diverse universes are inseparable from Brahman. They are nothing but Brahman only. They are manifestations of Brahman only.'

"Karkati was quite satisfied with the intelligent answers given by the minister. She then asked the king to give answers for her questions. She wanted to sound his depth of knowledge.

"The king said, 'Brahman alone really exists. This heterogeneous universe does not

really exist. The world exists through Sankalpas only. If the Sankalpas are completely destroyed, this world gets dissolved. Sankalpas generate this universe. Ignorance stretches the bonds of our worldliness and repeated transmigrations with their concommittant evils.

"'O Karkati! You have referred in your questions to Brahman only which manifests Itself as this universe and yet which is non-dual, indivisible, infinite, all-pervading and self-luminous. Jivanmuktas or liberated sages behold this Supreme Self or the only Reality which exists in the past, present and future. Para-Brahman is Sattwa or Be-ness. It occupies an intermediate seat between Sat (being) and Asat (non-being). Brahman exists even after the dissolution of the universe. Brahman should be realised directly by the pure mind after annihilating the Sankalpas and Vikalpas (Aparoksha-Brahma Gnana). Study of the Atma Gnana books can only impart indirect knowledge of Brahman (Paroksha-Brahma Gnana).'

"Karkati was immensely pleased with the king when she heard his intelligent answers. She said, 'Yourself and the minister are real sages. You are fit to be honoured in this world. You both shine like the sun of knowledge (Gnana-Surya). Your words of wisdom acted on me as nectar. My body is cool now. Those who associate with Gnanis are blessed people. All men should place your holy feet on their heads. O King! How shall I serve you now? Command me.'

"The king said, 'O Karkati! In future do not kill persons for your food. Never injure any living being.' Karkati replied, 'Well! I tell thee in truth, my Lord! I shall henceforward never kill anybody.' The king said, 'If it be so, O thou eater of animal flesh, tell me how shalt thou support thy body by abstaining from animal food?' Karkati replied, 'I will again repair to the top of the mountain and practise Nirvikalpa Samadhi for a long time. I will drink the nectar flowing within. I shall quit the body in the end and attain Videha Mukti. I tell you now, O king, that till the end of life, I shall no more take away the life of any living being. You may be rest assured of my word.'

"The king said, 'O Karkati! Please accompany us to our palace, and remain with us. We will give you in abundance the bodies of robbers and villains who do atrocious crimes. You can practise meditation after quenching the fire in your stomach by having a sumptuous meal of these wicked persons.'

"Karkati agreed. She assumed the graceful form of Lakshmi and accompanied the King and the minister to their golden palace. The king collected three thousand villains within six days after their arrival. These were handed over to Karkati for her food. She assumed the form of Karkati and piled upon her shoulders the three-thousand villains. Then she took leave of the king and the minister and repaired

to the Himalayas. She refreshed herself with her food, took a little rest and then entered into Samadhi. She used to rise from her Samadhi after the lapse of four or five and sometimes seven years. Then she would go to the court of the king and spend sometime in conversation with the king and the minister and return to her abode in the Himalayas with her prey of villains. Even to this very day, both the king and Karkati are thus moving friendly towards each other." So said Vasishtha to the high-minded Rama.

THE STORY OF INDRA AND AHALYA

Vasishtha said, "O lotus-eyed Rama! Mind is the slayer of Atma. Mind alone creates this world. The actions of the mind alone are real actions; the actions of the body are regarded as no acts. Brahma alone can really understand the marvellous powers of the mind. This body is a mould prepared by the mind for its operations. The mind thinks of the body and becomes the body itself. Then it gets entangled in this body and undergoes various sorts of pains and sufferings through this body. The sage who identifies himself with the All-pervading Soul or Atma and who knows himself as bodiless, is freed from all evils which are accidental to the body. Indra and Ahalya also were not conscious of the bodily pain."

Rama said, "O venerable preceptor! Who was this Indra? Who was that Ahalya? May I hear something about them?"

Vasishtha said, "In days of yore there reigned a king at Magadha (Bihar), Indradyumna by name. He had a wife named Ahalya. In that city there lived a person who was known by the name of Indra. He was the head of all rakes. This queen Ahalya had heard the tale of the incestuous intercourse which occurred in former times between the former Ahalya, wife of Gautama and Indra.

She felt a passion for this Indra and lived in his company for some time. This matter was reported to the king. The king became very angry. They were both cast into the cold water of a tank in the cold weather. They did not show any sign of pain. They kept smiling together as in their merriment. Then they were thrown on a big frying pan kept on fire. They remained unhurt and said, 'O king! We rejoice at the delight of our souls in thinking of one another.' They were trampled down by the elephants but they remained unruffled and said, 'O king! We feel our hearty joy at the remembrance of each other.' They were then lashed with rods and straps. They were beat with hammers. They did not show the least symptom of pain. They simply smiled and laughed.

"The king was struck with wonder. He asked Indra and Ahalya, 'How is it that you both do not experience any pain when you are tortured?'

"They gave the following reply, 'O king! No torment can separate us from each other. This world is full with the form of Ahalya and myself. We view the whole world as full of ourselves. We see our beloved in every shape and form. I look at her face. She looks at me. We are in the enjoyment of bliss and so we are entirely unconscious of our body. We do not experience any pain. We will not feel even the slightest pain even if the body is

cut into pieces. When the mind is intensely attached to an object, it will not experience any pain. When the mind is perfectly absorbed in any object, who else is there to observe and feel the actions of the body. Mind only is the instrument for experiencing pain. This mind is wholly absorbed in an object that it likes best. How can pain touch it? No power on earth will be able to divert this mind from its beloved object. All these bodies originate from the mind only. Mind does everything. It is the highest body. Even if this body perishes, mind will take fresh bodies quickly according to its liking. If this mind is destroyed beyond resurrection, through Atma Gnana, then only bodies will not crop up.'

"The king rejoiced at their statements. Muni Bharata who was sitting by the side of the king in the court-hall said that the couple spoke words of wisdom, although they were under the strong influence of passion. The king banished them both from the kingdom so that they might enjoy themselves freely in a foreign country. The body with various organs is no other than mind. This universe also is nothing but the mind. If the mind perishes, both body and the universe also will vanish." Thus Sage Vasishtha concluded the story.

Vasishtha said, "O undaunted Rama ! The mind of a sage is not different from Brahman. The mind of the un-enlightened one is the cause of his ignorance and error. There are infinite Shaktis in Brahman, *viz.*, Iccha Shakti, Kriya Shakti, Gnana Shakti, Bhuma Shakti, Akarta Shakti etc. The Supreme Brahman is Full, Perfect and Undecaying. His power of fluctuation is present in the air ; His power of hardness is present in the stone, heat in fire, vacuity in Akasa and fluidity in water. His bliss is felt in the hearts of the holy ; His prowess is seen in Yogis ; His creative power in the works of His creation and His power of destruction in the cosmic Pralaya at the end of a great Kalpa. Just as the tree is contained in the seed, so also everything is contained in Brahman. Brahman is One. He manifests as many through His illusory power. Brahman only manifests as Manas or mind through thinking, as the Jivatma, or the individual soul through the Upadhi or limiting adjunct of Avidya, as Ishwara through the Upadhi of Maya and as the universe through Vikshepa Shakti or projecting power.

" Bondage and freedom are the conceptions of the ignorant. It is wrong to speak of the bondage of the soul which is ever free. It is untrue to seek the emancipation of the soul, which is always emancipated. The world is as

real to the men of this world who are sunk in the mire of ignorance as the fabulous story or the old grand-mother's tale narrated by a mother to her boy."

Rama said, 'O venerable Guru. Please narrate the story to me. I am eager to hear the same.' Thereupon Vasishtha narrated the story.

" A certain boy once asked his mother to recite to him some pretty story for his amusement. Whereupon she related the following mythical story :—

'Once upon a time, three princes lived in a city called Void. They were very noble, virtuous and brave. Of these three, two were never born and the third never entered the womb for being conceived. They started on a journey and took rest in the garden of Akasa. They ate various kinds of fruits and continued their journey in the upward direction. Having gone a long way, they came across at mid-day a confluence of three rivers, running with its rapid currents and swelling waves. Of these three rivers two had no water in them, while in the third there was nothing but white sand. They all took their bath in the last river and sported for a long time and drank some water, which was as sweet as milk and cheered their spirits. They resumed their journey and reached a town at sunset which was not then in existence and built there three houses. One house had no foundation, the second had no

walls and the third had neither walls nor roof. The three princes dwelt very comfortably in these three beautiful houses that were built in an invisible town in the Akasa. They found three pots in their houses. The first two broke into pieces upon their lifting, and the third was reduced to dust at their touch. They put in these pots eight measures of rice minus twelve measures and cooked the same in a beautiful manner without water and fire. They distributed the food to countless, mouthless, tongueless and teethless Brahmins. The three princes partook of the remaining food with full satisfaction of their hearts. In the evening they went out for hunting and spent their time in a pleasant manner'.

"After the mother had finished her story, the boy was very pleased at what he had heard. He believed that the story was quite a true one. Similarly the ignorant persons who have neither discrimination nor Atmic enquiry believe that this world is quite real. This air-built castle of the world which is taken for a reality, is like the story, heard by the boy, which is only a false fabrication of the imagination of the boy's mother. The mother has given a name and a form to an airy nothing. Even so, the mind has given a name and form to these illusory objects of this false world. This universe is nothing but of the nature of Sankalpa. The mind generates this world. Nothing is really existent, save the creations of your imagination. The imagination fashions

all the objects in their peculiar fanciful forms. The heavens, earth, sky, air, rivers, mountains, trees, etc., are all creations of your Sankalpa or imagination, like the visions in your dreams. Imagination gives a shape to an airy nothing. The expansion of this mind alone is Sankalpa and Sankalpa generates this world through its power of differentiation. The whole universe is the net-work of imagination or Sankalpa. Sankalpa or imagination is the most active power of the mind. Therefore, O Rama, annihilate all Sankalpas and attain the Nirvikalpa State wherein there are no modifications of the mind or Sankalpas."

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THE STORY OF A SIDDHA

Vasishtha said, "O Rama! The ignorant persons only are subject to errors caused by their false imagination. They take this illusory world for a reality. They attribute perishable properties to the imperishable Atma or soul. Their minds ever fluctuate through their Sankalpas or thoughts. They identify themselves with their bodies. But the sages are entirely free from wrong conceptions and errors. This world is like a mirage for them. They always identify themselves with the Immortal Atma.

"O Rama! Abandon your wrong view of the reality of the world. Give up all that is false and untrue. Brahman or the Immortal, All-pervading Self, which is the true substratum and support of all, is the only Reality. Enquire into the nature of the Truth. You are never bound. You are ever free. When Brahman alone is the only reality, where is Jiva? Where is mind? Where is bondage? Where is freedom? Who is bound? Who attains salvation? Bondage, and freedom are all false imaginations of the mind.

"The connection of the perishable body and the immortal soul is like that of a pot and the ether in it. The unreal world appears as a reality to us and the imaginary duration of

the universe is like a long dream in our sleep. This world is a long dream. This world is a big forest. It is filled with the serpents of disease and death. Mind is the Lord of this forest. It drives us to all sorts of dangers and difficulties. It is the thought or idea of the world, that is the cause of its existence. O Rama, annihilate this world from your mind through enquiry, reasoning and discrimination. The mind by its restless desires involves you in pain and death.

"Do not give a loose rein to the mind. Curb it ruthlessly. Restrain it. Annihilate it. You will soon cognise the Truth and attain the final emancipation. All pains, sorrows and delusions will terminate.

"The mind has no independent existence. Just as the waves are dependent on the waters of the sea, so also the mind is dependent on the Supreme Soul. The mind is ever changing. It takes a friend for a foe, and a foe for a friend. It brings the great to a low level and exults the low to a high level. It has one feeling or state at one time and another feeling or state at another time. It takes the truth for untruth and an untruth for truth. Pleasure and pain, happiness and sorrow and joy and grief are the creations of the mind only. The mind only reaps the fruits of good and evil actions. There is no perception of an object independent of the mind. The mind is the cause of all its feelings. You hear, feel, see, taste and smell

through the mind only. It is the mind that moves this body. The passing of time, distance of place, length, breadth and height, quickness and slowness of motion, swiftness or slowness of time, perception of great and small, too much or too little, blackness or redness, round or oval,—all rise in the mind only. They all belong to the mind proper.

"Thoughts of objects lead to bondage. Renunciation of thoughts leads to emancipation. This universe is nothing but the expansion of thoughts. This world is a big show. This show is kept up by the mind only. Just as the seasons produce the changes in the trees, so also the mind causes differences in the disposition of human beings. There are as many minds as there are men in this world. It is difficult to find two men of one mind.

"The mind sports in objects. It creates illusion. Through the play of the mind nearness seems to be a great distance and great distance appears to be nearness. A Kalpa seems to be a moment and a moment appears to be a Kalpa. To illustrate this idea well, I shall narrate to you now a very interesting story. O Rama! Hear this with rapt attention.

"Lavana, a descendent of king Harishchandra ruled over the country of Uttara Pandava. He was a glorious and virtuous king. He was once seated on his throne. All his ministers and officers were present. There appeared at this time a Siddha or a magician.

He bowed down to the king and said, 'Deign, O Lord! to behold my wonderful feats.' The Siddha waves his bunch of peacock's feathers. The king had the following experiences. A messenger from the king of Sindhu entered the court with a horse like that of Indra and said, 'O Lord! My master had made a present of this horse to you.' The Siddha requested the king to mount upon the horse and ride it at his pleasure. The king stared at the horse and entered into a state of trance for two hours. Afterwards there was relaxation of rigidity of his body. The king's body fell on the ground after some time. The courtiers lifted the body. Then the king gradually received consciousness. The ministers and courtiers said to the king, 'O Lord! What is the matter with Your Majesty?' The king said, 'The Siddha waved his bunch of peacock's feathers. I saw a horse before me. I mounted on the horse and rode in a desert in the hot sun. My tongue was parched. I was quite fatigued. Then I reached a beautiful forest. While I was riding on the horse, a creeper encircled my neck and the horse ran away. I was rocking to and fro in the air during the whole night with the creeper encircling my neck. I did neither take my bath nor food during the day. I was shivering with extreme cold.

"'The day dawned and I saw the sun. I cut the creeper that encircled my neck. I then beheld an outcaste girl carrying some food and

water in her hands. I was very hungry and asked her to give me some food. She did not give me anything. I followed her closely for a long time. She then turned to me and said, 'I am a Chandala girl. If you promise to marry me in my own place before my parents and live with me there, I will give you what I have in my hand this very moment.' I agreed to marry her. She then gave me half of the food. I ate the food and drank the beverage of Jambu fruits.

"'Then she took me to her father and asked his permission to marry me. He consented. Then she took me to her village. The father of the girl, killed monkeys, crows, and pigs for flesh and dried them on the strings of nerves. A small shed was erected. I had then my seat on a big plantain leaf. My squint-eyed mother-in-law then looked at me with her blood-red eyeballs and said, 'Is this our would-be son-in-law?'

"'The marriage festivities began with great eclat. My father-in-law presented to me clothes and other articles. Toddy and meat were freely distributed. The meat-eating Chandalas beat their drums. The out-caste girl was given to me in marriage. I was named as Pushta. The wedding lasted for seven days. I spent eight months in the company of this girl. A daughter was born to me. She brought forth again a black boy in the course of three years. She again gave birth to a

daughter. I became an old Chandala with a large family and lived for a long time. Children are the source of grief. Miseries of human beings which arise out of passion take the form of a child. My body became old and emaciated on account of family cares and worries. I had to undergo the pain through heat and cold in that dreary forest. I was clad in old and ragged clothes. I carried loads of logs on my head. I was exposed to the chill winds. I had to live upon the roots. I spent sixty years of my life, as if they were so many Kalpa ages of long duration. There was severe famine. Many died of starvation. Some of my relatives left the place.

" ' I and my wife left this country and walked in the hot sun. I carried two children on my shoulders and the third on my head. I walked a long distance and then arrived at the border of a forest. We all took a little rest under a big Palmyra tree. My wife expired on account of long travel in the hot sun. My younger son Pracheka rose up and stood before me and said with tears gushing out of his eyes, ' Papa, I am hungry, give me immediately some meat and drink or else I will die.' He repeatedly said with tears in his eyes that he was dying of hunger. I was then moved by paternal affection. I was very much afflicted at heart. I was not able to bear the distress. Then I made up my mind to put an end to my life by falling into fire. I collected some wood, heaped them together and set fire to them.

I stood up to jump into the fire, when I fell down from my throne and woke up to hear the sound of the musical instruments and to see you lifting me and shouting the words 'Jaya' (victory to thee), 'Jaya' (victory to thee). I now find myself as the king Lavana but not as a Chandala. I understood that the magician put me to all these imaginary troubles for so long a period.'

"The ministers enquired as to who this Siddha was. Sambarika, the Siddha disappeared immediately."

Vasishtha said, "O Rama! This Siddha is no other than the Divine Maya. This story clearly illustrates that this universe is no other than the mind itself. Para-Brahman only appears as the mind and the world. Whatever you see is a manifestation of Chit only. Time is but a mode of mind. In dream you experience the events of a century within five minutes. When the mind is concentrated, one hour appears as five minutes. If there is no concentration, ten minutes appear as three hours. Everybody has experienced this in this world. Within two hours' time King Lavana had the experience of sixty years.

"This universe is a creation of the mind. Mind or Maya is the greatest juggler or magician. Mind or Maya represents the Siddha or the magician, of the above story. Mind is Maya. Mind is the instrument of Maya. The experiences of King Lavana represent the

miserable condition of human beings who are slaves to desires and cravings and the state of the world. This illusory world is only a display of the infinite power or omnipotence of the Lord. Under the magical influence of Maya, the illusory power of the Lord, all beings walk in this world wholly deluded. They believe in the reality of unrealities. The real is unreal for them. Just as the tree is extended by the expansion of its boughs and branches, so also the mind is enlarged by the various inventions of its imagination.

" If you destroy the Sankalpas or imaginations of the mind, if you discipline the mind in a perfect manner, if you bring the mind gradually under your control through discrimination, enquiry, dispassion, and regular meditation on Atma you will not be overpowered by Maya. You will attain immortality and enjoy the Eternal Bliss of the Infinite."

STHITI PRAKARANA

THE STORY OF SUKRA

Vasishtha said, "O valiant Rama! The mind is all. It is the agent for all actions. The negation of the outer world, and the suppression of the thoughts serve to curb the demon of mind. The world abides in the mind in the same manner as the sun-beams abide in the sun. The mind is the reservoir of the worlds. The mind is the same as the world and the world is identical with the mind. The mind and the world are intimately and inseparably connected with one another. The play of the mind constitutes this world. The world shines as consciousness only.

"The picture of the universe is drawn on the immaculate Chidakasa without the help of a painter or a canvas or a brush or any other materials. It itself appears. It is ever seeing itself. This world is like a long dream in the waking state. The reflection of the world in the All-pervading, Indivisible, Homogeneous, All-full, Self-luminous Brahman who is the silent witness is like that of the image in a mirror. This world shines through Brahman only. Brahman is the substratum for this universe. There is no relationship of cause and effect.

"Meditate on the Eternal, Pure, All-pervading, All-full, Indivisible and Changeless Brahman. Gradually all fluctuations of the mind will

cease. You will become identical with the Supreme Self. Just as many pictures are carved in a stone, so also heterogeneous worlds manifest in Brahman. Brahman is Non-dual. This world is illusory. It depends upon Brahman for its existence. That which is illusory and dependent cannot be called as an entity. There is really nothing to be called the universe, since to constitute a second there is no cause or effect connected with Brahman. Brahman alone is. The universe is nothing but a reflection in Brahman. O long-armed Rama! Listen attentively to the story of Sukracharya. You will understand clearly the truth of my statements. There is a table-land on the Mandara mountain, which is full of beautiful flowers and trees. Here Muni Bhrigu performed rigorous Tapas in olden times. His son Sukra was a brilliant person. He was very handsome too. He never used to part from his father. He was in a neutral state like Trisanku. He roamed freely in the bowers of Mandara in his youthful sport. Sometimes he played like a boy. At other times he sat in meditation like his father. His father was in Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

"Sukra looked at the sky and saw a celestial lady traversing in her aerial journey. He became quite enamoured of her. He checked the impulse of his mind but he was absorbed in the thought of his beloved object. He continued to think of the lady with his

closed eye-lids and indulge himself in his reverie of an imaginary kingdom. He thought that the nymph (Apsara) was passing in the air to the paradise of Indra. He left his physical body and followed her closely to the happy regions of the celestial gods. He saw before him Indra and Indraloka. Sukra bowed down to Indra who received him with respect and made him sit by his side. Sukra saw the same lady who traversed in the air. She also loved Sukra. They then lived together happily. Sukra then came down from Indraloka. During his descent Sukra's Jiva mixed with the cool rays of the moon and became the cool snow. This snow fell on the paddy fields. It changed itself into paddy. The rice was cooked and eaten by a Brahmin of Desarna country. It was transferred into semen. Sukra who was in the form of sperm in the Brahman came out as his son. Then he had the company of Tapaswins. He also did Tapas for a long time in a forest in the mountains of Mahameru. He had a son also. He was very much attached to his son. He had a downfall on account of his attachment to worldly objects. He had several incarnations on account of his Vasanas. At last he was born as the son of a Muni on the banks of the Ganges.

"The body of Sukra which was lying by the side of his father Bhrigu was reduced to a mere skeleton on account of the wind and heat of the sun. The body was not devoured

by rapacious beasts and birds through the contact of Bhrigu sitting nearby.

"After the lapse of thousand years, the great Bhrigu rose from his Nirvikalpa Samadhi. He opened his eyes and saw the body of his son lying as a skeleton before him. He became very furious and began to curse Yama. Yama appeared before Bhrigu in order to explain the real state of affairs and said, 'O Sage! I am only administering the laws of Ishwara. I carry out only the Divine Will. Please do not spoil your Tapas through your anger. The laws of Ishwara are inexorable and unrelenting. In Brahman there is neither action nor enjoyment. It is ever pure, actionless and changeless. There is neither actor nor enjoyer from the absolute point of view. In this world of Agnana there is actor, there is enjoyer, and there is Karma. All beings are born through Sankalpas. They enjoy the fruits according to their Karmas. You are certainly not justified in cursing me. Your son brought this state through his own Sankalpa. The actions of the mind alone are true actions.

"'The ignorant mind which is prone to evil destroys the body just as little children break their dolls of clay in sport. The mind is bound to the earth by its desires and freed by its freedom from earthly attractions and expectations. That is called the mind which thinks to itself, 'This is my body and these are the members of my body and this is my

head.' Through its life in this world it is called Jiva. It is called Buddhi through its determination. It is called Ahamkara when the ideas of 'I' and 'mine' assert themselves with signs of anger. The same mind passes under various designations according to its different functions. It is this mind alone that is the universe through the conception of various differentiations. When the mind receives the light of truth, it is called the enlightened intellect. When you and your son were meditating, your son left this body through intense desire and fled to the celestial region, just as a bird flies from its nest to the open air. He was in the company of a celestial lady by the name of Viswavasu. He left the Devaloka, passed through the atmospheric air and was born again as the son of a Brahmin in the land of Desarna. He went the round of lives as a king in the country of Kosala, a hunter in a great forest, a swan on the banks of the Ganges, a king of the solar race, a Raja of the Pundras and then the preceptor of the solar race in Salva country.

"'He was the king of Vidyadharas for a period of a Kalpa; he was the intelligent son of a Muni, a ruler in Souvira country, the Guru of Saivites in another country, a bamboo cluster in another country, a stage in a forest, a boa-constrictor in a forest, a hunter in the Vindhya hills and at Kaikatav, and an ass at Trigarta.

Thus he passed through various wombs, and went through births high and low on

account of the force of the Vasanas. At last he was born as the son of a Brahmin Rishi on the banks of the Ganges under the name of Vasudeva. In this birth he got control over his organs. He has been engaged in Tapas for the last 800 years with matted locks. If you wish to know the series of illusory births of your son, you can do so now through your divine vision.'

"Muni Bhrigu observed in a moment through his introvision all the events of his son's lives reflected in the transparent mirror of the pure mind which received its light from the Self-luminous Atma. He said to Yama, 'Please excuse me for my previous conduct. Thou art omniscient. Thou art the best dispenser of law. Thou art the only person who has thorough knowledge of the three periods of time. Thou art the lord of the past and the future.'

"Then Yama took Bhrigu to the banks of the Ganges where Vasudeva was practising Tapas. Vasudeva was in Samadhi. Yama willed that Vasudeva should come down from his Samadhi and see them. Vasudeva opened his eyes. He beheld Yama standing with his father. Vasudeva rose from his seat and made his obeisance to them. They all seated themselves on a slab of stone. Vasudeva said, 'I am blessed through your presence today. I am purified. I enjoy immense bliss.' Bhrigu blessed his son, 'May you possess Atma

Gnana ! May you be free from Agnana. May you ever enjoy the bliss of Brahman.' Sukra closed his eyes and observed the events of all his past lives through his divine vision. He was freed from future births.

" Sukra was struck with wonder at the remembrance of his former births. He said, ' Blessed is the law of the Supreme Being, which is without its beginning or end and by whose power this world is revolving. I have undergone great hardships. I have been whirling in the Samsara for a long time. I have seen all that should be seen. I have now attained knowledge of the Self. I am freed from the trammels of re-births. Now rise, O father ! Let us see that body lying on the Mandara mountain, which is now dried like a withered plant.'

" All the three proceeded to the Mandara hills to see the body. Vasudeva saw his former body as the son of Bhrigu. He said, ' O father ! Here is that shrivelled body which thou hast nourished with many a dainty food before. There is that body of mine which was so fondly anointed with sandal paste. Man can enjoy eternal bliss when the mind is destroyed. Atmic enquiry alone will lead one to the attainment of the knowledge of the Self. When one attains Brahma Gnana he is drowned in the ocean of bliss and is freed from the dire pains of this terrible Samsara.'

"Yama said, ' Now, O Sukra, cast off

thy body of Vasudeva and enter the dead body (thy former body) just as a king enters his palace. Become the preceptor of the Asuras and give them proper instructions.' He bid adieu to them and disappeared.

" Sukra entered his former body in accordance with Yama's instructions and abandoned the body of Vasudeva. The veins and arteries, all the cells and cavities of the dead body were again infused with blood just as the dry beds of rivers are filled with floods of water in the rainy season. The body being filled with blood gave the limbs the bloom like that of the growth of lotuses in lakes and the bursting of new shoots and buds in green plants. The Nadis allowed the Prana to circulate freely over them throughout his body. The old sage Bhrigu finding the revivification of the dead body of his son, sanctified it with propitiatory Mantras and sprinkling of water from his sacerdotal water pot (Kamandalu). Sukra then rose up from the ground and bowed down to his father. The father then embraced Sukra and shed a flood of affectionate tears on him. They both rejoiced at there reunion. The father and son spent their days in the Jivanmukti state preserving the equanimity of their minds, and the steadiness of their dispositions amidst all the viscisitudes of time and place. In course of time Sukra obtained the preceptorship of the Asuras and Bhrigu remained in his patriarchal rank and authority among the sons of men (Manavas)."

THE STORY OF BHIMA, BHASA AND DRIDHA

Vasishtha said, " He who studies books on Vedanta should not long for fruits at once. He should practise regular meditation on Brahman or the Immortal Soul. Gradually the mind will be purified, ripened and rendered steady. Eventually the mind will attain self-realisation, or final emancipation.

" He who is attached to his wife, sons, wealth, lands and other worldly possessions is a miserable man. He is held in bondage by a hundred ties of expectation. He has no peace of mind. He does not derive any benefit by leading a sensual life. He takes the untruth for truth and thereby loses both his way and his life. Wealth is the source of all pains. To earn money is painful. To preserve it is more painful. To lose it is still more painful. But pain will not affect those men who are endowed with dispassion and discrimination and who regard this world as a straw and shun all its concern as a snake casts off its slough.

" Those men only who possess pure reason and good understanding, who are naturally inclined to the study of the scriptures and who thirst for Moksha or final emancipation by abandoning whatever is vicious and untrue can cross this terrible ocean of Samsara. Those who

are truthful and pure, who follow the path pointed out by the Vedas, and who keep company with sages are saved from destruction. They attain perfection and immortality. Those who have attained illumination by getting knowledge of Self are protected by the guardian-angels of the eight quarters. Those who thirst after knowledge and are seekers of truth, who are endowed with pure cosmic love, and who engage themselves in ceaseless Atmic enquiry can be truly called as human beings. All others are but brutes.

"No one should walk in the wrong path. No one should perform actions which ought not to be done. Rahu had to undergo great suffering in drinking even nectar, because he moved in the wrong path and committed a wrong action.

"Wise people who are endowed with virtuous qualities and knowledge of the scriptures, who walk in the right path, who abide by the established mode of conduct, and who do not long for sensual pleasures can work wonders. They can accomplish any difficult task. They can possess anything. They can easily attain longevity, fame and self-realisation. Things which cannot be obtained by other people can be easily attained by them. Dangers and difficulties run away before them. They are remarkable personages. They have the power to bring their destiny under their command, convert all evil into good and make their

prosperity perpetual. They are surely successful in all their endeavours.

" O Rama ! Renounce all your sorrows, fears and anxieties, and walk in the path laid down by the scriptures. Of what avail is wealth without knowledge of the Self ? Treat wealt has a straw. Wealth brings miseries only. Desirelessness leads to the attainment of supreme peace and eternal bliss.

" There is no other way for your emancipation in this ocean of Samsara save by your association with the sages. All your pilgrimage, austerity and study of Shastras are of no avail for your salvation. One should prostrate at the sacred feet of a sage and free himself from the round of births and deaths through his help. A sage is one who has annihilated his egoism and anger, who has knowledge of Atma, who walks in the path of righteousness and conducts his life in accordance with the injunctions of the scriptures. Those who are bereft of direct perception of Brahman have no cognised Chidakasa but those who have realised Brahman are said to be Chidakasa itself. If the cloud of egoism, the little ' I ' obscures the sun of Gnana-Akasa, then the lily of Brahman, the big or infinite ' I ' will never bloom. The sprout of egoism (Ahamkara) with its stem of re-births spreads everywhere with its long branches of ' mine ' and ' thine ' and yields the fruits of miseries, sorrows and pains. So long as there is egoism, there will be no end

of desires. He who roots out the germs of egoism from his heart, verily prevents the tree of Maya or Samsara Vriksha from jutting out in a hundred branches".

Now Rama said to Vasishtha, "O revered preceptor! What is the nature of the egoism (Ahamkara)? How can we annihilate this formidable egoism? What are the benefits of destroying egoism? Whether the man is connected with the Vasanas of the body or not? Whether the egoism consists in the body or the mind or both, and whether it is got rid of with the abandoning of the body?"

Vasishtha replied, "He who neither desires nor dislikes anything, who preserves the serenity of his mind at all times is not affected by the feeling of egoism. There are three kinds of egoism in the three worlds. Of these, two kinds of egoism are beneficial and of superior nature but the third is of a vile kind and is to be abandoned by all. The first is the supreme and undivided ego which is eternal and which pervades through the world. It is the supreme soul (Paramatma), besides which there is nothing in nature. Meditate on the formula "Aham Brahma Asmi" "I am Brahman". Identify yourself with Brahman. This is Sattwic Ahamkara. That knowledge which makes us perceive our own Self to be more subtle than the tail end of paddy or to be as minute as the hundredth part of a hair and to be ever-existent is the second kind of Ahamkara.

The two kinds of egoism are found in Jivanmuktas or liberated sages. They lead to the liberation of men. They will not cause bondage. Hence they are of a beneficial and superior nature. The third kind of Ahamkara is the knowledge which identifies the 'I' with the body composed of the hands, feet, etc., which takes the body for the soul or the Self. This is the worst or basest form of egoism. This is found in all worldly persons. This is the cause for the growth of the poisonous tree of re-births. Those who possess this kind of egoism can never come to their right sense. Countless persons have been deluded by this form of Ahamkara. They have lost their intelligence, power of discrimination and power of enquiry. This kind of egoism produces baneful results. People come under the influence of all evils of life. Those who are slaves to this form of Ahamkara are troubled by various desires which induce them to do wrong actions. It debases them to the state of a beast. This kind of Ahamkara should be ruthlessly annihilated at any cost.

"This base Ahamkara should be destroyed by the other two kinds of Ahamkara. The more you thin out this egoism, the more you will get knowledge of Brahman or the light of the soul.

"Try to attain Brahman by means of the first two kinds of superior egoism. If you are firmly established in that supreme immaculate

state wherein even these two kinds of superior egoism are abandoned, one by one, then such a state is the Imperishable Abode of Brahman. Do not identify the 'I' with the physical body. Identify yourself with the Supreme Self or Para Brahman."

"Sambara soliloquised thus, 'The Asuras Dama, Vyala and Kata whom I created before to destroy the haughty Devas were all overthrown in battle by the Devas on account of their foolishness, pride and egoism. They were destitute of knowledge of the Self. They had the strong conception of 'I' and 'mine'. I will now again create through my Mayavic power Asuras who will be endowed with Atma Gnana, who will be well-versed in the Atma Gnana Shastras, and who will be free from the illusory Ahamkara. They will be able to vanquish the Devatas in combat.'

"Sambara created three Asuras through his Mayavic power. They filled the space of the sky like bubbles that float on the surface of the sea. They were all-knowing. They had the knowledge of Atma. They were all dispassionate and sinless. They had a calm mind. They were endowed with virtuous qualities. They were free from love, hatred, doubts, fear, delusion, attachment, egoism and mineness. They cared not a straw for the whole universe. They were known by the names Bhima, Bhasa and Dridha. Sambara ordered them to fight with the Devas. They fought with the Devas

for countless years. They were not elated with pride. They were fearless in fighting with the gods. They rushed out with a firm conviction that the unsubstantial body is nothing and that there is nothing which people call as 'I'. They had no thoughts of the past and future. They had no fear of death. Their minds were attached to nothing. They killed their enemies without thinking themselves as their slayers. They were perfectly free from all desires. They did their duties and thought themselves as non-doers of them. They waged the war under the sense of doing their duty to their master Sambara. They were free from passion and affection. Those who are free from egoism, who practise Atmic enquiry will be free from fear of birth and death. They will be ever contented with whatever objects they can easily get. They will look equally upon all.

"All the Devas fled from the battle-field, ran to Lord Hari for refuge and prostrated before Him. Lord Hari marched to the battle-field and waged a war with the three Asuras. The Asuras were killed by the Lord and were sent to Vaikunthaloka. Those that are saved or slain by Lord Hari are equally entitled to His Supreme Abode.

"Vasanas (subtle desires) generate bondage. If the Vasanas are annihilated, bondage disappears. All Vasanas will be burnt by the fire of knowledge of the Self. If the Vasanas are destroyed, the mind will attain quiescence

like a gheeless lamp. The mind has gained its existence because people entertain thoughts of objects and the impressions of objects are imprinted in the mind. If these thoughts are annihilated, the mind vanishes at once. The mind is kept confined in this world on account of Vasanas. When the mind is released from the Vasanas, it is said to have its emancipation.

" The three Asuras Dama, Vyala and Kata were defeated through their Ahamkara (egoism). The Asuras—Bhima, Bhasa and Dridha got victory on account of their non-Ahamkara.

"From the above story you can clearly understand, O Rama, that those who are free from egoism will always attain success. Never follow the example of Dama, Vyala and Kata. Follow the conduct of Bhima, Bhasa and Dridha. O Stainless Rama ! Know fully well all things through your Atma Gnana and rest peacefully for ever in the All-blissful Self."

UPASANTI PRAKARANA

THE STORY OF KING JANAKA

Vasishtha said, "O high-minded Rama! Know that this world is illusory. This universe is of the nature of Atma Gnana only. Men of Rajasic and Tamasic natures, consisting of the properties of action and passions, or inertia and ignorance, are deluded by the ideas of birth and death. Men born with Sattwic nature of goodness easily lay aside this deep rooted illusion, just as a snake casts off its slough. They will be ever free from the apprehension of births and deaths. Through the association with the wise, study of Shastras and practice of right conduct they are endowed with insight, discrimination and right understanding.

"Learn to discriminate between the real and the unreal and stick to the reality. That which was not before, nor will be in existence at the end, is no reality at all. That which continues to exist both at first and in the end, is Truth or Reality. It is the mind that creates the world."

Rama said, "I am fully convinced that the mind creates the world. Tell me, O venerable guide, what are the sure means of destroying the illusion created by the mind."

Vasishtha replied, "Knowledge of the Shastras, dispassion, and association with the sages will help one to destroy the illusion created

by the mind. The instructions of holy sages help him to practise Atmic enquiry. He is able to distinguish the truth from the untruth. Know, O Rama, that this universe is the expansion of the universal soul. Abandon the error of the distinction of one thing from another. All are Brahman only. 'I' is that Brahman only. Annihilate the idea that the 'I' and the universe are different.

"Just as there is no difference in the whole body of water of the wide ocean, so also there can be no distinction in the Eernal All-pervading Brahman. There is no mistake in your believing the all as one. Know that there is no duality. Know yourself as a spiritual being. All the created objects do not really exist. Know that you are not separate from Brahman and abandon all sorrows. Do not think that you are in a helpless condition. Be tolerant, composed and even-minded.

"Pleasures and pains, birth and death, heat and cold, gain and loss, censure and praise, and respect and disrespect are mere imaginations of the mind. There is only one supreme principle. This only exists for ever.

"Do not think of the past or of the future. Be dispassionate and calm. Be rational. Abandon hopes and expectations. Rest in Brahman and be as full as the ocean, and free from the feverish cares of the world. Rise above love and hatred. Give up longing for worldly objects. Have an equal vision over

all. Remain tranquil. Shine like a jewel with your internal light. Have firm conviction in Atma Gnana. Be satisfied in your own Self and be freed from the feverish anxieties of the world.

"One will get very easily Brahma Gnana in his final birth. He will possess all the qualities of a sage such as cosmic love, magnanimity, tolerance, equal vision, equanimity of mind, mercy, forgiveness, etc. in his final birth.

"We have two ways or paths which are best calculated for the salvation of souls. The one is the path wherein the student follows very closely the instructions of the preceptor. Salvation will result either in the very birth of his initiation by his Guru or in some succeeding births. The second is the attainment of knowledge by self-culture. Knowledge arises spontaneously in a man. Brahma Gnana dawns in him like a fruit falling from heaven unexpectedly. O Rama, I will recite to you now the old story in which Atma Gnana arose in one like a fruit falling from Akasa, as in the second path mentioned above.

"Once a mighty and virtuous king reigned over the country called Videha. His name was Janaka. He was very rich, generous and noble. He protected the subjects like Vishnu. He possessed many virtuous qualities.

"In the beautiful season of spring, he entered his lovely garden which was full of

various sorts of fragrant flowers. He left his ministers and attendants outside the garden and went round the garden alone. He heard the songs of Siddhas. I will now recite to you, O lotus-eyed Rama, the songs of the Siddhas which describe the experiences of the Siddhas. One Siddha said, 'The knower and the known commingle together. The individual soul merges in the supreme soul. There arise supreme wisdom and bliss. This is Atma-Gnana. This should be longed for. Another Siddha said, 'One should eradicate all Vasanas, abandon all the visible objects and then ceaselessly meditate on Atma or Brahman which is the Light of lights.'

"Another Siddha said, 'We should ceaselessly meditate on the All-pervading, Eternal Light which illuminates all other objects, which is in the midst of all that is and that is not and which occupies the neutral centre between Sat (existence) and Asat (non-existence).'

"Another Siddha said, 'We will meditate on that Self-luminous Atma which always calls itself 'I' in all Jivas or individual souls, which begins with the letter **a** and ends in **h** with the dot **m** (*i.e.*, Aham̐, which we continually inhale and exhale in our breathing 'Soham'). Some Siddhas sang, 'We adore that real existence who is all; to whom belong all things; and by whom are all made; from whom have all sprung; for whom they exist; in whom they subsist; unto whom do they all return; and into whom they are all absorbed.'

"Some Siddhas remarked, 'Those who forsake the God Who is situated within the cavity of their hearts and search for the God outside are really going in search of conch shells after abandoning the Kastubha gem which is placed in their hands.'

"Other Siddhas remarked, 'This Atma can be attained only by those who have annihilated completely all desires.'

"Others said, 'Those persons who, in spite of their knowledge of the non-existence of happiness in all worldly objects, do yet attach their minds to them are asses only and not human beings.'

"Others said, 'The serpents of Indriyas (organs or senses) which arise again and again from the cavities of the body and hiss again and again should be slain by the rod of firm discrimination, just as Indra broke the hills by his Vajra (thunderbolt).'

"Other Siddhas said, 'He who has a calm mind and who is endowed with equal vision, will attain Atma or the Immortal Soul which is an embodiment of bliss and knowledge and which is Existence Absolute. This is Moksha or final emancipation.' The above songs of the Siddhas constitute the Siddha Gita.

"Janaka was deeply moved by the songs of the Siddhas. He at once left the garden, sent his ministers and attendants and shut himself in a room in the topmost storey of his palace.

He began to reflect deeply on the true significance of the songs sung by the Siddhas.

" He soliloquised within himself ; ' On what faith can I rely on this world which has nothing substantial, neither pleasure nor reality in it and yet I know not why my mind is deluded by it. I am ever afflicted with pains and miseries though I am in possession of immense wealth. The hundred years of my life is nothing but a moment in eternity and yet I estimate my life greatly. The kingdom I possess is a mere atom when compared with the countless universes. I have become a slave to my desires and senses. Short is the duration of my royalty. How is it that I feel secure of its continuance as a thoughtless man. The present life is a destructible one and yet I am a fool to rely on it. What is far from me *i.e.*, the objects of the senses appear to be near and that which is nearest to me *i.e.*, my innermost soul appears to be farthest from me on account of my ignorance. I must abandon the sensual objects in order to cognise my innermost soul which is eternal.

" ' Everything is perishable. Nothing here is everlasting and beneficial. Those, even the greatest of persons, will in course of time become the lowest of the low. Whence has this ignorance overpowered my soul ? Of what avail are these possessions and numerous relatives when I am in distress and troubles. My wealth is but a bubble. It is a false appearance

before me. Many emperors and kings with their wealth have perished. Many Indras have been swallowed up like bubbles in the ocean of eternity. Hence there is no reliance on anything.

" ' Millions of Brahmas have passed away. The kings of earth are reduced to dust. What is the confidence then in my life and stability. The world is but a long dream and the sensuous body is but a misconception of the mind. If I rely on the body and the objects, I am really to be blamed. Countless universes, Brahmas and Jivas have come and gone. O mind! Where then is the permanency of your existence? My conception of myself and the perception of other objects are false imaginations of my mind. My egoism has caught hold of me. I have debased myself to this ignorant state by my desires, egoism, and attachment to the body. I am a fool. My span of life is measured every moment. Days and nights are passing away and yet I have not cognised my true imperishable Self. The juggler of time is making playthings of all persons on his play ground of the world and flinging them like balls. Enough, enough with all the deaths I have undergone previously.

" ' We meet with one hardship after another and yet we are so shameless as not to feel ourselves disgusted with this miserable and mundane life. We see that all the objects are perishable and yet we do not seek the Imperish-

able. Ignorant people perform every day dire sinful acts and countless vices. In youth they are sunk in ignorance, in adolescence they are heated by their passions and are entangled in the meshes of women; in old age they are oppressed with the care of their families; they groan under the burden of Samsara. They are overcome by sorrow and remorse and they die. When will they find time to do good actions and worship the Lord?

"'We are constantly in search of what is more pleasant and lasting than others, but never seek after the Immortal Self, which is beyond all our earthly cares. Women with their eyes like lotuses and charming smiles soon fade and die. If many Brahmas and Vishnus are created and destroyed within the twinkling of an eye, what am I, a puny creature, before them'? This world is said by the wise to be a boundless ocean of woes. How then can anybody expect any happiness herein?

"'The mind constitutes the root of the tree of Samsara which ramifies in all directions with branches full of flowers, tendrils, fruits, etc. How did this Maya come? This mind dances in the theatre of this world to the music of the organs. It is this mind which is called Sankalpa. Mind is a bundle of Sankalpas. If the Sankalpas are annihilated, the mind will also be destroyed easily. If the root of mind is annihilated, the tree of birth and death also will be destroyed. I have now found out the

thief who robbed me of my Atmic pearl. I am now awakened. I have detected the robber of my soul. His name is mind. I have been long suffering through this treacherous villain. I will no longer allow myself to be deluded by this mind. I have determined to kill this mind. I will pierce the mind with the needle of discrimination and string it with the virtues of self-control and dispassion. I am now awakened to spiritual knowledge and will now pursue my spiritual enquiries. I have now found out my long-lost soul. I will ever contemplate on the Pure, Immortal Atma and attain the Supreme Peace. I will subdue my mighty enemy, the mind, and give up the ideas, 'I am this body; the properties and possessions are mine'."

"'I have gained all spiritual experiences by hearing the soul-stirring songs of the Siddhas —the Siddha Gita. I regard them as my Gurus. I have totally annihilated my mind. I am now enjoying the bliss of the Eternal. I am absolutely free from pains and affliction. Dualities, differences and distinctions have vanished. I behold the One Self everywhere. I am ever peaceful.

"'The ideas of 'I', 'he', 'you', 'here', 'there', 'now' and 'then' have vanished from me. O Atma Gnana which has destroyed my ignorance and lifted me to this lofty state, I adore Thee!'

"Janaka remained in Samadhi or super-

conscious state for a long time. He returned from his Samadhi and said, 'I see everywhere the One, Indivisible Brahman only: I am ever fixed in my own Self. Nothing can disturb me. I am free from love and hatred. I do not long for mundane objects. I am desireless. I have equal vision. I possess equanimity.'

"He then attended to the affairs of the state without the sense of agency. He discharged the duties as they presented themselves to him without any concern or expectation of their rewards. He became liberated in his living state. He was unmindful of the past and heedless about the future.

"O Rama! Knowledge of the Self can be attained only through ceaseless Atmic enquiry and not through actions. The worldly minded cling to sensual objects. The longing for self-realisation comes through efforts in the previous birth. One should destroy the dire Agnana which produces pains and re-births.

"If any one wishes to attain the Supreme Self, he should previously destroy all desires, cravings and egoism. Is not the grain obtained only after ploughing the field?

"After the cloud of egoism is dispersed, the Divine Light shines as brightly as the sun. He who has cognised the Self is freed from the thoughts of the external world. He is not subjected to the joy or sorrow of this world. He is free from love and hatred. The dense

cloud of egoism which screened the sun of Brahman is dispelled by Atma Gnana. The precious jewel of Gnana locked in the casket of the hearts of Gnanis will bring in a moment, like the Kalpa tree, whatever they think of.

"The play of Chit alone shines as this world. This world is not apart from Brahman. It is not a separate entity. It has no existence of its own. The world, as world, is ever-not. This world is nothing but Brahman. Brahman appears as this universe through the mirror-mind.

"Dispassion joined with the knowledge of unity melts down the substance of the mind and confers the best and highest state of happiness and rest in the Supreme Self, which is the chief aim of life. Now, lotus-eyed Rama, reflect and meditate on the Self like Janaka and attain Atma Gnana," concluded Vasishtha.

THE STORY OF GADHI

Vasishtha said, "O Rama! Maya is the illusory power of the Lord. She is very powerful. It is only those who obtain the grace of the Lord that can conquer Maya. We have in Gita 'This divine illusion of mine, caused by the qualities is hard to pierce; they who come to Me, cross over the illusion.' (Chapter VII-14). It is not possible to describe the grandeur and infinite potency of Maya. One can have knowledge of Atma by conquering Maya. Mind is a strong weapon of Maya. Maya works through mind. Mind is a product or modification of Maya. Conquest of mind alone leads to the annihilation of Maya. Maya is another name for birth and death. Listen to the story of Gadhi attentively. You will have a clear understanding of the nature of Maya and her operations.

"There is the country of Kosala on the surface of this land, which is full of forests and fruitful trees. There lived a learned Brahmin known by the name of Gadhi. He was very intelligent and well-versed in the Vedas. He was an embodiment of virtue. He left the company of his friends and relatives and went to a forest to perform Tapas. He stood in the midst of the waters of a tank upto his neck for a period of eight months with a view to have the Darshan of Lord Vishnu. Lord

Vishnu appeared before Gadhi and asked him to state the object of his Tapas.

"Gadhi came to the bank, prostrated before the Lord and said, 'O Lord! Thou art the receptacle of the three worlds. I wish to merge myself into the Sat-Chit-Ananda Para Brahman. Be pleased to enable me to know directly the true nature of Maya and her operations.' Lord Hari said, 'You will be able to see Maya directly. You will be able to free yourself from Maya afterwards through your devotion.' Then the Lord disappeared from his sight at once like the city in the clouds.

"Gadhi was glad at the sight of the Lord. His heart was filled with joy at having come in contact with the Lord. He then passed some days in forest. When he was taking his bath in the tank, he thought upon the words of Lord Hari. He saw himself dead from a disease in his own house. He noticed that all his friends and relatives assembled together and wept by the side of his body. He also beheld that his faithful wife wept bitterly with a shower of tears at his feet. He saw that his mother was embracing him. He noticed that his weeping relatives washed his body, performed the funeral rites and cremated the body. Thus Gadhi saw, while standing in the midst of the waters in the tank through his mind, the illusory actions performed by the mind.

"Then Gadhi was re-born as a male child to

a Chandala woman of dark complexion, who lived in a village in the neighbourhood of Bhutan. He attained the sixteenth year of age. He too had a complexion like the dark cloud of the rainy season. He married a girl of the same caste and lived happily with her. He had many children. He became old and built a hut of leaves and straw. He lived there as a hermit. All the family members were swept away by the cruel hand of death. He alone survived.

"He was tired of solitude and then he wandered through different countries. At last he came to the rich city called Kira. He was passing along the royal road. The king of the city had recently died. The king left no heir. The people, in accordance with the immemorial custom of the choice of a king, decorated the state elephant with gems and embroidered silk cloths and let it loose to go its own way and select a king. The Chandala looked steadily on the elephant with great curiosity. The elephant came to him and lifted him upon its *houdah* with its long proboscis. The people sounded their trumpets and musical instruments and exclaimed with joy from the eight quarters, 'Victory be to thee! Victory be to thee!' The handsome ladies of the palace adorned him with many ornaments and garlands of flowers. He was installed on the throne. The ministers and the commander-in-chief carried out his orders. He was known by the name of Gavala.

" He reigned for full eight years over the Kira kingdom. He one day removed all his ornaments and walked on foot in a street by the side of the palace. He saw before him a band of out-castes who were playing on musical instruments. The leader of the band, an old man, saw the present king of Kira, recognised him and addressed him with the old familiar name, ' O Katanja, my old relative, where are you now ? I am very glad to see you here to-day. Has the king of this place taken you in his service on account of your skill in music'? The king did not pay any attention to the words of the old man. He immediately ran in haste into the inner apartment of the palace. The ladies of the palace and the servants who were standing at the window, overheard their conversation and were in deep sorrow to learn that their king was a Chandala by birth.

" The king's face became pale. The ladies and the attendants informed the ministers thus : 'This Lord of earth, our King, belongs to the lowest class of Chandalas. How shall we act now ? Now the ladies, the ministers and the attendants stood at a distance from him. They refrained from touching his body. He was shunned by all. They all said to one another that the sin of their long association with the Chandala cannot be expatiated by any other penance than by the act of burning themselves alive in the fire. All people, even children, fell into a large fire-pit. Gavala, the Chandala king witnessed the sad catastrophe. He was

very much moved and was afflicted at heart. He soliloquised thus : 'All my countrymen perished in the flames on account of their association with me. What is the use of keeping my life? Let me also perish in the flames.' He prepared a pile for himself and made an offering of his body in the burning flame.

"When Gavala cast his body amidst the flames, the violent and painful emotion roused the dreaming Gadhi from his reverie amidst the water. He began to palpitate and shiver. After some time he had a clear mind. He was free from the effects of Maya. He had a calm mind. He came back to the bank of the tank and began to reflect upon 'who he was, and what he saw and did in that state'. He then said to himself, 'I am the same Gadhi and I am taking bath in the tank. What I was just seeing is quite astonishing to me. I am unmarried and know not the form of my wife. I am ignorant of conjugal love.' Gadhi reflected on these thoughts and passed some days in his own hermitage.

"He happened to entertain a Brahmin at his house as a guest, who was highly gratified with feasting upon fruits and honey. They both performed their daily Karmas at the time of Sandhya. When the sun set in, they sat on their seats of rest and began to talk on diverse subjects and Atma Gnana stories. Then Gadhi asked in the course of

conversation, 'Why is it, sir, that you look so thin and emaciated ?"

"The guest replied, 'I spent a month in the famous country of Kira. There I met a man who narrated to me the following anecdote :—

'A king ruled over that country for about eight years. It was found out by the people that the king belonged to the lowest class of people, the dog-eaters, the Chandalas. Thereupon all the Brahmans and others threw themselves into the fire, and the king also did the same.' Hearing this news I left the place and went on a pilgrimage to Prayaga to wash off my sins. There I performed penances and Chandrayana Vrata. So I became lean and emaciated.'

"Gadhi was quite surprised at this narration. He reflected within himself thus : 'What I saw about my death amidst my relatives was undoubtedly a delusion of my mind ; but the latter part of my vision of becoming a Chandala is verified by the Brahmin's observance of the penance of Chandrayana for his having entered the Chandala city. I must, therefore, learn fully the particulars of the Chandala and proceed immediately to Bhutan.' Therefore to verify for himself the truth of the events of his previous life as a Chandala, he travelled onward and entered the country he had seen in his dream where he saw his birth place, the locality of the Chandalas.

The Chandalas gave him a detailed report of Katanja and his life.

"He proceeded still further to the Kira country where he saw the palace and heard the events of his life narrated by the people there. He was struck with wonder. He thought within himself, 'Is this the Maya of Lord Vishnu? Now I have a clear understanding of the nature of Maya and her operations. Maya is mysterious indeed' !!!

"He at once went to the cavern of a mountain and did rigorous Tapas for one year to propitiate Lord Hari. He lived on a handful of water only. Lord Vishnu appeared before him in the form of dark blue cloud and said, 'O Gadhi, thou hast fully seen the glory of Maya and its true colours. Thou hast known the network of delusion spread by Maya. What more dost thou want? Why dost thou perform this rigorous Tapas here?'

"Gadhi prostrated before the Lord, praised Him and said, 'O Lord! I have known clearly the nature of Maya. But I am still ignorant of Maya in its latent innate state. How is it, my Lord, that the same visions continue to be seen in the waking state also? It was for a moment only that I thought to have seen some thing as false as a dream, when I stood amidst the waters but how was it that it became manifest to my outward sense and sight? Why did the delusion of my birth as a Chandala became

palpable to my naked eyes ? It ought to have remained in my memory only.'

" Lord Vishnu replied, ' What is seen outside is in reality a vision of one's mind only. There is nothing outside anybody as the earth, sea, hills and the sky. They are all contained in the mind. This universe and other objects have for their substratum the mind. They do not exist at any time apart from the mind. All persons think through the delusion of the mind that this world is quite real and enjoy all objects. Just as fruits and flowers are contained in the seed alone, so also this earth and all other things are contained in the mind alone. The whole universe rests in the mind only. The sight of the things in the present and the thoughts of the absent past and unseen future are all but acts of the mind, just as the making and unmaking of pots are both of them the doings of the pot-maker.

" ' The drama of life exhibits but a partial scene at a time. It is no wonder for the shifting stage of the mind to present to you the single scene of the Chandala, when it has in store and can with equal ease show you infinite appearances at its pleasure. Why should you be astonished at all, O Gadhi, if your mind, which contains potentially in itself the whole universe, should bring into objectivity your life of a Chandala which is only an insignificant portion of the whole ?

" ' It was the impression on your mind that

made you think yourself as the Chandala. The ideation of your mind through concentration or one-pointedness reflected itself in the life of a Chandala. This reflection was caught up by the Brahmin guest. He was also affected. Like the analogy of a crow and palmyra fruit the ideation of the life of Chandala reflected itself in the minds of all who lived in Bhutan and the country of Kira. The reflection assumed a reality in the minds of all. These were all vagaries of imagination of the mind only. Nothing is real. These were all the fumes of your fancy. Whatever you heard and saw was the network of your imagination only. The mind infatuated by its hopes and desires sees everything before it, as one dreams of objects as if they are present before him. There was neither the guest nor the city, nor were there the Bhutias or the Kiris. It was all a day-dream. Whatever you saw with your mind's eye was unreal. (The truth is that, on your way to the country of Bhutias at one time, you halted in the cave of this mountain. You fell into a sound sleep on account of the long travel. You dreamt of the Chandala and the Bhutia city and the Kira country. It was all the delusion of your mind only that showed you all these things at the time of your worship in the waters of the tank). The manifestations of the mind are wonderful indeed. Different persons view the one dream of the universe in variety of ways just as many boys amuse themselves with one kind of play in different ways.

" ' It often happens that many things occur at one and the same time like the analogy of crow and the palmyra fruit. The idea of Chandala was of contemporaneous growth in the minds of all the Bhutias, Kiris, and yourself, as there are many men who are of the same opinion, however wrong it may be. It is true that a Chandala had erected a house at the border of the village, which you saw in a ruined condition, but it was a wrong conception of yours to think yourself as the very man who built the very same house. You are mistaken.

" ' Ignorant persons only who have got the idea of differentiation of ' I ', ' you ', ' he ', ' mine ', ' thine ', ' this ' and ' that ' are subject to delusion, grief and pains. Those who behold only the Illimitable and All-pervading Atma everywhere, and who have realised that the universe is nothing but Brahman or ' I ' will be ever joyful and peaceful. They will never cling to objects. They will have no clinging or craving for objects. They have annihilated Agnana. Still you are under the influence of mental delusions. You have not attained perfect Gnana. Moha is a mysterious wheel. Mind is the axle of this wheel. Annihilate this mind through discrimination and knowledge. Then you will not be troubled by Maya. Retire into the caves of this hill and do Tapas and meditation for ten years. Then you will attain perfect and full knowledge of Brahman.' Saying this Lord Vishnu disappeared from the sight of Gadhi.

" Gadhi did severe Tapas for a period of ten years. He relinquished all his desires, attachments and dire delusions and at last attained knowledge of the Self. He reached the supreme seat of eternal bliss devoid of fear, pains and longing for objects and became a Jivanmukta or liberated sage."

STORY OF UDDALAKA

Sri Vasishtha said, "O Rama, like Muni Uddalaka, conquer the five Bhutas, get rid of the thoughts of the body and the world, start the enquiry of Atma, penetrate deep into the original cause of all and allow the transcendental light to dawn upon your mind."

Sri Rama said to Vasishtha, "Tell me, venerable Guru, how did sage Uddalaka destroy the five Bhutas and attain the non-dual state?"

Vasishtha said, "O Rama, I shall now relate his story. It will be very interesting and inspiring. Through Atmic enquiry he reached the immaculate Brahmic seat of ineffable splendour. This sage lived on the slopes of Gandhamadana hills, which had a very charming scenery. He did severe austerities. He studied religious books and performed his daily rites and duties regularly with great faith and devotion. Discrimination dawned in his mind. He began to cogitate within himself in the following manner :—

'When shall I be free from births and deaths? When shall I get rid of my Sankalpas and the two currents of attraction and repulsion? When shall I enjoy the pure Nirvikalpa Samadhi and rest myself very peacefully for ever in my own Swaroopa? When shall I become absolutely desireless? When will the cravings for sensual

objects cease? When shall I remain unattached like a dew drop on the lotus-leaf? When will the little birds of the forest build their nest of grass in the locks of hair on my head, when I remain in my deep meditation?'

"Uddalaka seated himself in Padma Asana and began to meditate on the Supreme Self. He was not able to control his mind. It wandered from one object to another like a monkey. He reflected thus and said to the mind, 'O foolish mind! Why do you run towards perishable objects? You cannot get even an iota of happiness from them. Why do you perform selfish actions? These actions produce intense pain. Rest yourself peacefully in the Supreme Self. You will enjoy eternal bliss. Why do you run after sound, touch, form, taste and smell? The Vasanas are the woven net to bind you. O senseless mind! Do not die like a deer through sound, like a male-elephant through touch, like a moth through form, like a fish through taste and like a bee through smell. The deer, the elephant, the moth, the fish and the bee do each die by their addiction to the gratification of a single sense only. But you are exposed to greater danger by your desire for satisfying all the five senses. How will you enjoy the Supreme Peace of the Eternal when you are troubled by the five senses combined together? Surely miserable is your lot! You have entangled yourself in the snare of desires, just as the silk worm entangles itself in its own cocoon made out of its saliva. Free yourself

from all desires. Then you will be free from bondage.

" 'I analysed my body at each atom from head to foot. I am not able to find what we call the 'I' in any part of it. Only Brahman or the Supreme Self fills the whole universe. It has neither name nor form. It is colourless, attributeless. It is neither short nor long, neither small nor great. I am myself that All-pervading Self.

" 'O mind! You have created all differences and distinctions. You are the cause for all pains, troubles, sorrows and miseries. I shall presently destroy you through discrimination and enquiry of 'Who am I'.

" 'How can 'I' be applied to the body, mind, Prana or the senses? How can 'I' be applied to the net work of flesh and bone, or the eyes, ears, nose or tongue? The 'I' is all-pervading, immortal, indivisible and self-luminous.

" 'I have been long deceived by you. You are the thief who has plundered the jewel of Atma from me. I will not trust you any more. I have no concern with you and the body. The union with you, the body and the senses is only temporary.

" 'O mind! Go back to your original home. Do not wander in the forest of mundane desires. Become wise and reach that state of Eternal Bliss whence there is no return.

"'I am calm now. My heart is full of joy. I am now loosened from the bonds of my mind, body and senses. I behold the unity of all things. I am fearless. I find myself as all and all in all, at all times and everywhere. I have a balanced mind and equal vision. I feel the majesty of my soul. I am contented in my self. I rejoice in my Atma.'

"Then Uddalaka sat in Padama Asana with his half-shut eye-lids and began to meditate. He uttered Pranava or OM with its appropriate intonation, with an elevated voice and high note, which rang with a resonance like the ringing of the bell. The Pranava OM consists of three and a half matras. When he intoned the first part or Akara of OM, the process of Rechaka or exhalation of Prana took place. The burning fire of his heart pervaded the whole body and burnt it up. This was the first step of his practice of Yoga by the Pranava or utterance of the sacred monosyllable OM. This is the first stage of Pranava Yoga. He did not attain the stage of Rechaka through any practice of Hatha Yoga. In the second stage, *i.e.*, Ukara of Pranava Kumbhaka or cessation of breath took place. The fire that burnt the body before was blown out in a moment like the flash of lightning. The body became snow-white like the burnt white ashes. This was the second stage of his Pranava Yoga. He did not attain this stage through Hatha Yoga. Then in the third stage of Pranava or Makara Puraka or inhalation of breath took place.

Uddalaka enjoyed perfect rest now. This was the third stage of his Pranava Yoga. The body of Uddalaka became lustrous like the form of Vishnu.

"He practised Pranayama and controlled the Prana and Apana. He closed the nine openings or avenues of the body to prevent the Prana from going outside. Then he withdrew the senses from their respective objects with great difficulty. He confined his subdued mind in the cavity of his heart. He destroyed all thoughts through strenuous struggle.

"The crowds of doubts rose repeatedly in his mind of their own accord. He destroyed them boldly by the sword of his reason, as a hero destroys his enemies. He then destroyed through his discrimination the mental darkness. Then he noticed before him a beautiful collection of light. He tided over this stage. Then he became drowsy. He shook off his sleepiness. Then he saw the broad expanse of the blue sky or Akasa. Then came Moha or delusion. He dispelled this also successfully. He passed through the stages of darkness, light, sleep, Akasa, Moha and eventually attained the stage of Nirvikalpa Samadhi which no language can describe. All visibles vanished. He was drowned in an ocean of nectar. He attained the Immortal Brahmic seat of ineffable splendour. He was freed from all sorts of pains. He swam in the sea of joy like a floating swan.

"After six months, Uddalaka awoke from his

Samadhi. Siddhas, Devas, and celestial damsels encircled him and began to tempt him. Devendra offered him his Devaloka. Uddalaka refused his offer. The Devas said, 'O venerable sage! We are waiting here with our greetings. Mount on this heavenly car. It will take you to Devaloka. Heaven is the last abode of bliss, where you will have full gratification of your desires. Behold here celestial damsels. They are waiting for you with fans and garlands of flowers. There is no bliss equal to that of Heaven. You can enjoy the heavenly pleasures until the end of this Kalpa. Your austerity is only for the enjoyment of heavenly pleasures.' But Uddalaka was not a bit moved by the temptations of the Devas and the wily charms of the celestial ladies.

"He treated them with due honour. He requested them to depart in peace. They thought that it would be useless to wait any longer as Uddalaka was not a bit moved by their temptations. So they departed to their celestial abode.

"Whether the sage rests in the blissful state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi or union with Brahman or the Supreme Self for a moment or thousand years he will never afterwards long for the sensual objects which cause re-birth.

"Uddalaka roamed about freely in forests, groves and table-lands of the Vindhya and the Himalayan ranges and spent days, months, and years in deep Samadhi. He attained the state of

perfect tranquility and became a Jivanmukta. He was freed from sorrows, doubts, stains and the pain of repeated births and deaths.

"Through the long practice of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, Uddalaka merged his mind in the Absolute Consciousness (Chit Samanya) and attained the Sattwa-Samanya."

Sri Rama now said, "O venerable Guru! What is Sattwa-Samanya? Please enlighten me on this point."

Vasishtha replied, "When the Sankalpas or thoughts are annihilated, the mind becomes of the nature of Absolute Consciousness. This Absolute Consciousness (Chit-Samanya) is itself Sattwa-Samanya. Sattwa-Samanya is universal be-ness. It is the state of Turiyateeta. Just as camphor is absorbed in the fire so also the mind is absorbed in the Pure Consciousness, and the external and internal objects and all phenomena vanish. This is Sattwa-Samanya. The transcendental vision of a Gnana or Jivanmukta is Sattwa-Samanya. The sage withdraws himself into his own Self, when objects appear before him, just as the tortoise withdraws its head and limbs into its carapace. He has no thoughts of the objects. He is not a bit affected by them. This is Sattwa-Samanya."

"The Jivanmuktas alone who rest in Nirvikalpa Samadhi through knowledge and discrimination enjoy the Supreme Vision of Sattwa-Samanya but not the ignorant.

"After the lapse of a long time Uddalaka thought of becoming a Videhamukta by abandoning his mortal frame on earth. He seated himself in Padmasana. With his eye lids half open, he shut up the nine openings and controlled the senses. He kept his head, neck and trunk erect and controlled the Prana. He then practised Kechari Mudra by fixing the tip of his tongue to the roof of his palate. He joined his teeth together. Now there was total cessation of breathing. His countenance was composed and clear. He had the supreme vision of unity. He drowned himself in the ocean of Brahmic Bliss. His face was blooming like a fresh lotus. He became one with the Supreme Light of lights and attained Videhamukti or disembodied salvation.

"He who enters into Nirvikalpa Samadhi through ceaseless Atmic enquiry will enjoy the Eternal Bliss of Brahman and attain Immortality."

STORY OF BHASA AND VILASA

Vasishtha said: "O undaunted Rama! Those who practise meditation and rejoice in Atman or the Supreme Self are free from pains, troubles, miseries and sorrows.

"The Jiva or the individual soul is like a bull. He is wandering aimlessly in the dire forest of Samsara. He is bound by the strong cords of desires. He is lashed by the whip of Karma. He is suffering from the flea-bites of diseases. He is groaning under the heavy load of pains of Samsara. His body is contused or bruised owing to constant motion backward and forward. He has fallen on account of his ignorance into the deep abyss of countless births.

"The aspirant should annihilate his mind and cognise directly through intuition his immortal soul. Then only he can get rid of egoism and selfishness. He should have constant association with the sages or Jivanmuktas and find out the means for attaining Self-realisation.

"A pure and well disciplined mind is a sure means for attaining Knowledge of the Self. If the mind is merged in the Self, one will enjoy the state of Turiya or Brahmic consciousness. When one gets this experience, all Vasanas for objects will perish *in toto*.

" If Atmic enquiry is started in right earnest, the mind will gradually attain a high state of purity. One should annihilate his lower mind through the higher mind and attain Brahma-Gnana. Then only all pains of this terrible Samsara will terminate. When the mind is annihilated, when the base Ahamkara is destroyed, the light of Atma will dawn and the undying bliss of the soul will arise.

" To illustrate this experience, I shall recite to you now, O valiant Rama, an old story which contains a discourse between two brothers, Bhasa and Vilasa.

" Two hermits by the name of Bhasa and Vilasa lived in the hermitage of Sage Atri which was situated on the hill of Sahya. They were the two sons of the Sage Atri. They remained in mututal love like the flower and its fragrance. They had one soul and one mind in two bodies. They were so united with one another as if they were off-shoots of one and the same trunk. The aged parents expired. They performed the funeral rites. They were struck with great grief and sorrow at the demise of their parents. They shed tears profusely. They bid adieu to one another and went in different directions. They passed their time in the solitary forest and did rigorous austerities. They destroyed all desires. Their bodies were emaciated. But they did not attain true Knowledge. Then they again met together.

" Vilasa said : ' O Bhasa ! I welcome thee,

my beloved brother. Thou hast a seat in the innermost recess of my heart. Thou art my very life. Tell me, brother, how and where you passed so long a time after your separation from me. Hast thou got peace ? Hast thou attained the Knowledge of Self ? Art thou happy ? Hast thou been freed from the mental pains and anxieties ? Hast thou realised the bliss of the Infinite, and the felicity of the Eternal ? '

" Bhasa replied : ' I am very fortunate to meet you to-day. How can we expect to have our peace so long as the seed of desires along with its strong and deep roots is not destroyed, and the mind is not annihilated ? How can we expect to enjoy the Eternal Bliss so long as we have not attained Self-realisation and so long as we have not got Atma-Gnana ? See how our lives are spent in useless worldly pursuits, selfish endeavours and vain gossipping. The body decays as a withered tree. Old age overtakes us with its grey hairs and wrinkled skin. How can we enjoy the transcendental happiness so long as the turbulent passions are not destroyed and hopes, fears, etc., are not annihilated ? How can we enjoy the unalloyed felicity of Brahman so long as we have not removed the weeds of various cravings with the spade of pure reason or discrimination ?

' The rat of death is always busy in gnawing at the knot of life at the very root. The stream of worldly life flows on with the mud of passions and cravings with the foam and froth of cares

and anxieties and with the whirlpools of repeated transmigrations. The mind dances along with the senses. It has no rest even for a second.

"Brahma-Gnana is a sure specific for the cure of the disease of ignorance (Agnana). It is a panacea or sovereign remedy for the dire melody of re-births. Those who have not attained Brahma-Gnana and who waste their lives in sensual pleasures will be caught again and again in the wheel of births and deaths. Just as the dried leaves of trees are scattered by the winds, so also they are swept away by the current of death.'

"On hearing the soul-stirring discourse of Bhasa, Vilasa was extremely pleased. Then the two brothers applied themselves diligently to the attainment of knowledge of Brahman. They did constant and intense meditation on the Supreme Self, attained Self-realisation and became Jivanmuktas or liberated sages while living.

"Pains, miseries, sorrows and delusions will affect only those who are sunk in the mire of worldliness and ignorance. Those who have attained Self-realisation always enjoy the Eternal Bliss of Brahman or the Infinite."

THE STORY OF VEETAHAVYA

Vasishtha said, "O valiant Rama! Gnana or knowledge of the Self alone will destroy the dire re-birth. Knowledge alone will annihilate the pain-giving mind which is bound by the cord of desires. A man who is endowed with a pure mind, that is without attractions, will never be bound though he performs various sorts of worldly actions; whereas he who has an impure mind with attractions will ever be in bondage though he performs various sorts of austerities. He who does actions without craving or attraction with a pure mind will never have the idea of agency, expectation of fruits, actor and enjoyer through non-attraction."

Sri Rama said, "O venerable Guru! What is attraction? What is non-attraction? What is that attraction which leads one to bondage? What is that non-attraction which tends to freedom? How can I destroy this bondage? Please enlighten me on the above points."

Vasishtha replied, "If any one believes that this body is permanent, if he fails to discriminate between the body and its presider or indweller or inner ruler who is eternal, and if he thinks always of body only, he is a slave to attraction and is bound by attraction. This is

attraction. This will undoubtedly lead to bondage. The belief that everything is Brahman or Atma only, and that there is nothing for one to love or hate in this universe is non-attraction. This non-attraction will lead to Moksha or the final emancipation.

"Jivanmuktas are endowed with non-attraction. When there is non-attraction, the mind abandons the pleasures of the world, egoism vanishes and attachment for anything perishes. The state of non-attraction leads to Moksha. Those who are in possession of non-attraction relinquish the fruits of actions. They seek neither action nor inaction. Attraction entails one in re-births.

"This attraction is of two kinds *viz.*, Bandhya (binding)and Abandhya (non-binding). The former belongs to the ignorant, while the latter is the ornament of those who have attained Self-realisation. The former produces re-births through attachment to objects, while the latter generates discrimination and knowledge of the Self. Lord Vishnu and the hosts of Siddhas protect this earth by performing various actions through the Abandhya attraction.

"A Jivanmukta is not attached to actions though he performs manifold actions for the well-being of the world. He is quite indifferent though he associates himself with objects. He has no attraction for the objects. His mind is ever fixed in the Supreme Self only. He regards

this world as an unreality. He does neither live in future expectation, nor does he rely on his present possession. He does not live on the pleasure of his past memory. Sleeping he is awake in his vision of Supreme Light and waking he is plunged in the deep sleepless sleep of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. He does actions and remains as if he has done nothing. He does all actions without the error of believing himself as the actor. He neither rejoices nor grieves at anything. He behaves himself as a boy with boys and as a veteran with old people. He is youthful in the society of young men and is grave in the company of the wise. He rejoices at the happiness of others. He is sympathetic with the people who are in distress.

" He does his outward actions by the mere movement of the limbs of the body without the application of his mind, just as a baby sleeping in a cradle has the spontaneous play of his limbs without any purpose of his mind. An act done by the outer body without its intention in the inner mind is reckoned as no act of the actor, and it does not entail upon him its good or bad result. He neither shrinks from misery nor does he hail at his good fortune. He is neither elated at his success, nor depressed by his failure.

" When the mind is not allowed to dwell on sensual objects, it will gradually perish. This is called the Sushupti of Jagrat (sleep in the waking state). Just as the river mixes with the

ocean, so also the individual soul mixes itself with the Supreme Soul. When the seen and the sight merge in the seer, the Bliss of the Supreme Soul is experienced. This is Turiya state.

"When all desires are destroyed, the extinction of the expansive mind alone is Moksha. Destroy to the root mind and its thoughts. If one attains self-realisation where then will be bondage? The Jivanmuktas who have quiescence of mind and who have knowledge of Atma are absolutely free from cravings. Desirelessness is the axe with which the forest of this Samsara is cut down. Desirelessness is the flower-bunch in the tree of contentment and quiescence. A desireless man is totally free from all weaknesses of the heart. For a man of absolute desirelessness the whole universe is nothing but a straw.

"Those who rest in their own Swarupa or Atma will not be conscious of their bodies. They will never lose their Lakshya even when they are amidst many temptations of this world. Their minds will be ever fixed in Brahman though they work in the world for the well-being of humanity, just as the mind of a lady is ever centred on her paramour who lives at a distance, though she does her household duties. When all desires perish, the quiescence in the mind will lead to Moksha. Persons who are desireless will be benefitted by Moksha. Desireless persons are the happy

Jivanmuktas. Persons whose minds are engrossed in desires are bound. Videhamuktas are far above these two classes of persons.

"Such Jivanmuktas will neither long for things in the future nor think of the things of the past. They will always do actions for the solidarity of the world. They are not frightened or astonished at any wonderful occurrence in nature. They will never be disconcerted even, should the sun grow cold or the moon turn hot or the fire begin to burn with its flame downwards or the course of the river begin to rise upwards. This world with heterogeneous objects appears through the fluctuation of the mind only, just as the countless waves in the ocean arise in water through fluctuation in it."

Rama said, "O venerable Guru! What is the cause of the fluctuation of the mind and how to control it? Please enlighten me on these points."

Vasishtha replied, "The fluctuation of the mind is associated with the mind itself like oil in sesamum seed or whiteness in snow, fragrance in flowers, or the flame in fire. There are two paths to annihilate this fluctuation *viz.*, Yoga and Gnana. Yoga is the suppression of the modifications of the mind. It makes the mind turn on one object only. Gnana is self-analysis and thorough investigation of all things. Mind is nothing but the fluctuation of Prana. If the Prana is controlled, the mind is also controlled. If the mind is controlled and

if the fluctuations of the mind are arrested, all pains will cease and all re-births will come to an end."

Rama said, "How to control the Prana? How to stop its motion? This Prana is vibrating constantly with a tremendous velocity."

Vasishtha replied, "The motion of Prana can be stopped by the steady and regular practice of Pranayama or the control of breath. The Yogic student should have knowledge of the Yoga Shastras. He should possess Vairagya. He should be free from desires. He should be initiated by the Guru. He should have association with the Sages and Yogis. Then only he will succeed in controlling the Prana.

"Energy or Prana circulates through Nadis in the lungs, arteries and muscles of the body. It is the fluctuation of this Prana that impels and gives force to the internal organs of the body. The vibration of this vital breath excites desires and feelings in the heart. The vibration of vital Prana produces pulsation in the cavity of the heart and cognition through the mind. If the vital breath is suppressed, the mind is rendered quiet. If the action of the mind is stopped, the perception of the existence of the world becomes extinct, as we have no perception of it in our sound sleep when the mind is inactive.

"Meditation on one object will also produce suppression of the breath. The regular practice

of Puraka (inhalation) and Rechaka (exhalation) together with meditation will cause arrest of the fluctuating Prana. The utterance of the syllable OM, meditation upon the true nature of the sound uttered at the end of OM, pondering upon the significance of Pranava or OM will induce suppression of Prana. The practice of Kumbhaka or retention of breath will also arrest the Prana. The practice of Kechari Mudra will control the Prana. The tip of the tongue is reversed and raised upto uvula or the orifice of the palate and the orifice is closed. The air is made to go up the gullet. This will arrest the motion of Prana. If the mind is rendered vacant by getting rid of Sankalpas, Prana can be stopped. The vital breath ranges within the space of 12 inches from the tip of the nose. This region should be closely watched. Prana will be controlled by this method also. Turn the eyes towards the middle of the two eye-brows. This will check the motion of Prana.

"Through these practices the Prana can be controlled. Then one will gradually get freedom from re-births. It is by the practice of these methods, that a man is freed from sorrow, filled with divine ecstasy and becomes enrapt in the Supreme Soul. If the Prana is controlled, the mind will become very calm. There is intimate connection between the mind and the Prana. If the mind is rendered quiescent and if it is absorbed into its cause or the substratum, Brahman

alone will remain. He is the best of men, whose mind is freed from all desires and cravings and who has found his eternal rest in the Supreme Self."

Rama said, "Venerable Guru! You have related to me the path of Yoga which leads to the control of mind and Prana. Please tell me now the manner in which the mind is brought under control by means of perfect knowledge or Brahma Gnana."

Vasishtha replied, "The firm belief that Brahman alone exists everywhere without beginning, middle or end is true Gnana or perfect knowledge. Brahman pervades the whole world. The world is of the nature of Atma only. The firm conviction that the Shaktis of diverse objects are Atma only is the realisation of Atma. It is ignorance that causes our birth and pain. Perfect knowledge liberates us from these, just as our defective sight shows us the snake in the rope while proper view of it removes the error. Knowledge of Brahman constitutes perfection in man. 'All is Brahman only' is Tattwa Gnana. The firm knowledge and vision that this world is only Brahman is the Purna (fulness). When this world is Brahman only, where then can be existence or non-existence, entity or non-entity, bondage or Moksha? Behold the one Self everywhere. Know the unity amidst diversity. Realise the Self. Then all differences between trees, mountains, rivers, pots, and cloths will vanish. With them all Sankalpas will also disappear.

"By the comprehensive view of Brahman as all in all, you can find no difference between a piece of wood or stone and your cloth. Why then are you so fond of making these useless distinctions? Know that Brahman is the only imperishable substance which exists from first to the last. Know that this Brahman is your Atma or Soul. Chidabhasa or reflected consciousness or the individual soul and all objects ultimately merge themselves in the substratum or Brahman.

"O lotus-eyed Rama! Rest yourself in the blissful Brahman. Brahman itself manifests as names and forms through the mind, just as the water of the ocean manifests as foam, bubbles, ripples, waves, etc. He who is treading the path of Truth, who is practising daily Atmic-enquiry, will never be tempted to fall a prey to the trap of worldly enjoyments. He will never be moved by the worldly attractions or sensual pleasures. He will remain as unshaken as a rock against the winds. Those who are not in the least agitated even under the most trying circumstances and adverse conditions are persons who have attained Moksha. These persons only are fit to enter the kingdom of eternal peace. They only will attain self-realisation.

"Now I shall, tell you another path that leads to Moksha. O valiant Rama! Listen to it with rapt attention. A great Tapaswin named Veetahavya formerly lived in the

Vindhya hills. He grew in course of time dissatisfied with the ritual acts, which serve only to bewilder men and which are causes of diseases and difficulties to men. He gave up the practice of making his offerings to fire. He wanted to attain the Nirvikalpa Samadhi. He built a hut of leaves with the Branches of plantain trees. He spread in it his seat of deer's skin. He sat there in Padmasana with his legs crossed upon one another and placed his two hands on his two heels. He closed his eyes. He gradually withdrew the mind from the external objects, rendered it steady and eventually controlled it firmly in his heart. He reflected within himself thus, 'I controlled my mind but it is again agitated by Prana. It floats on the air like a dried leaf tossed by the wind. It impels the external organs as a charioteer drives his horses and is propelled by them in turn to their different objects. It runs from one object to another, just as the monkey jumps from one tree to another tree. I try to stop its course. It runs towards objects. It pursues them with avidity and eagerness. The five organs of knowledge are mere avenues of the mind. I am the seer. I am the silent witness.

"'O, my wicked and wretched organs, why do you in vain entangle yourself in miseries and troubles? Why are you so senseless as to roll on restlessly? I am pure consciousness. I kept company with the mind and the senses and so I had my downfall. The all-knowing soul knows well the eyes and ears but these

organs cannot know the internal soul. Knowledge will never come in close contact with the organs. They are like Brahmins and outcastes, cat and rat, mongoose and cobra. O mind! Why do you wander about like a strolling street dog? O perverted intelligence! You have mistaken this perishable body for the Immortal Self through Ahamkara. Do not confound the 'I' with the body and objects. Annihilate the sense of separateness that arises from the delusion of Ahamkara. O mind! Just as darkness vanishes before the sun, so also you will disappear soon through spiritual enquiry. O Mind! You have decided now to tread the path of truth and start the Atmic enquiry. The present course is really a laudable one. You will soon enjoy the eternal bliss of the soul'. Through this enquiry Veetahavya firmly controlled the mind, the senses and the Prana. He looked at the tip of the nose. His body became motionless. His breathing stopped. He then passed in Samadhi 300 years as if it was a moment. The loud roaring of lions, the dreadful noise of thunder, the shoutings of hunters could not wake him up from his Samadhi. His body was buried upto his shoulders under sand which was carried upon him by the floods. Awakening from his Samadhi, he found that his body was buried under the sand. There was no free motion of Prana. Therefore there was no motion in the body. He entered the mind and found that he had spent 100 years as Tapaswin on the slopes of Kailasa hills;

then as a Vidyadhara for another 100 years; as Devendra in Devaloka for 5 yugas; then as Ganesa, the son of Siva. Through the divine vision Veetahavya was able to observe the events of his former lives. He had knowledge of the three periods, past, present and future.

"Veetahavya wanted to lift his body out of the heap of sand in which it was buried. He went to the sun with his subtle body in order to bring Pingala. Pingala removed the sand that was accumulated around his body. Pingala entered the Vindhya grove in the form of a cloud. The cloud assumed the form of a big elephant. This elephant removed the earth and sand. Now Pingala went back to the original abode. The subtle body of the Muni entered the gross body and vivified it. The Muni took a bath and worshipped the sun. Afterwards he passed sometime on the banks of a river. He had no attraction for worldly objects. He possessed self-restraint, benevolence, serenity, mercy, contentment, kindness, wisdom, and internal bliss.

"He soliloquised thus, 'Till now, I have been controlling all my senses. Now I will enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi and remain as immovable as a rock. I will merge myself in the ocean of bliss or absolute consciousness. I will abide in my soul. I shall be like one who is in deep sleep. I will have no attraction for the objects of the world. I will be dead to the world. I will have no conscious-

ness of the world. Though in deep sleep, I shall be like one awake in this world. I will be fully conscious of my own Swaroopa. I will have perfect awareness. I will enjoy the bliss of Turiya wherein there is no heterogenity. I will drink the homogeneous essence of Brahman. Having reflected thus, he sat in meditation. He was in Samadhi for six days and nights. He enjoyed the eternal bliss of the soul and became a Jivanmukta. He freed himself from the round of births and deaths, and the pairs of opposites. He wanted to attain the state of Videhamukti (disembodied salvation). He entered the cave of a mountain, sat in Padmasana and reflected within himself thus, 'O desires! I take leave of you now. I enjoyed the material pleasures through you. I have become desireless now and enjoy peace. O anger! You helped me in protecting me from wicked people. I bid you goodbye. I have attained quiescence now. I have found out your tricks. O enjoyment! I bid you farewell, you tempted me to taste your bitter pleasures in countless births and transmigrations. Enough, enough with all the play I had with thee in this world. O sensual pleasures! I bid adieu to thee. You have deluded me for a very long time. I am now above your reach. You made me forget my real Sat-Chit-Ananda nature. O Pains! Thou art my saviour. You have opened my eyes. You are a blessing to me in disguise. Thou hast revealed to me the eternal bliss of the Soul.

But for thee, I would never have attempted to attain the *summum bonum*. Thou hast led me to the enquiry of Atma and practice of meditation and Samadhi. O body! My old and intimate friend, I abandon thee now. I pay my due respects to you. Though you gave me lot of pain, yet I crossed this ocean of Samsara with your help only. O greed! I have got contentment. I do not want any worldly gain. I have got the supreme wealth of Moksha. I have obtained the highest gain. I bid you farewell. O attachment and passion! Do not trouble me any more. I have got Vairagya and purity. I bow to thee, O my sweet cave, thou art my associate in my practice of meditation. Thou wert the only refuge for me, when I was tired of the noise of this tumultuous world. O my staff! I had found my best friend in you for relieving my fatigue. You were the support of my aged body. O my vital Pranas! I next bid you farewell, you kept company with me through all my various births. O virtuous deeds! I salute you again and again. Through your help only I was saved from doing wrong deeds and attained the final emancipation quickly. O brothers and friends! I take leave of you all now. May you all be happy. May you all attain the final beatitude.

"He uttered gently the Pranava which dispelled all sensual objects and Sankalpas. He meditated on OM. Darkness and light appeared and vanished. His heart was bright.

He then remained fixed as a rock in the Jagrat-Sushupti state. He attained the state of Turiya. He became Absolute Chit. He became the Absolute Sat. He became the Void of Atheists, Para Brahman of Brahmavadins, Purusha of Samkhyas, Isa of Yogins, Siva of Saivites, Kala of Kalavadins, Madhyama of Madhyamikas.

"He became 'That' which is known by the Sages, which pervades all, which illumines all lights, which is the one and the many, which is the final conclusion of all Sastras, which is the support and substratum for the world. He lived for twenty thousand years in this exalted state and roamed throughout the world happily. Eventually he was absorbed in the light of lights and attained Videha-Mukti or disembodied salvation."

NIRVANA PRAKARANA

THE STORY OF VILVA* FRUIT.

Vasishtha said: "O Rama! An object that gives pleasure at one moment gives pain at another moment. Milk gives pleasure when one is in a healthy state but gives pain and produces vomitting during fever, indigestion and diarrhœa. This is the experience of all people. If you entertain a desire to possess an object, then only the object gives you pleasure. Therefore desire is the cause of pleasures. Enjoyment brings temporary satisfaction of desires. When you get satisfaction, the object no longer gives you pleasure.

"It is mere foolishness to take delight in momentary pleasures. O Rama, annihilate all desires and thoughts. Do not associate the mind with objects. He who has no knowledge of the Atma is bound; he who has Brahma-Gnana is liberated from bondage. Therefore, O Rama, meditate constantly and intensely on Brahman and attain Brahma-Gnana.

"This mind is a mischievous imp. It is the cause of bondage and liberation. It is ever fluctuating. It jumps from Patala to the firmament in the twinkling of an eye. It has the power of creating or undoing the whole world in a moment. The oscillation of the mind generates the illusion. Mind is the effect

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*Vilva fruit is Bel fruit or wood apple.

of Avidya or ignorance. O Rama, annihilate this mind through destruction of Vasanas or control of Prana. Mind is nothing but a bundle of Vasanas. If Vasanas are destroyed, the mind can no longer exist. The expansion and contraction of mind causes the display and dissolution of the world. Therefore, stop the action of the mind by controlling the Vrittis or Sankalpas or thoughts. Control of the Prana will lead to the control of the mind. The movement of Prana produces movement of the mind. The breath of life conducts and stops the business of the world. Restrain the breath by the practice of Pranayama or regulation of breath. If the mind is destroyed, you will enjoy infinite bliss. If the visibles and the sight are merged in the seer, if the knower, knowable and the knowledge (Gnata, Gneya and Gyana) are combined, *i.e.*, if there is dissolution of the triad (Triputilaya), you will realise the supreme peace of Atma.

" Renunciation of desires, control of breath, and right enquiry will contract the actions of heart and mind and consequently check the rise of passion and illusion. Right understanding weakens the sensuous mind. Wrong understanding thickens and fattens the carnal mind. The mind of a sage is no mind. It is Brahman itself. It is the essence of purity by itself. Just as copper is transmuted into gold by the process of alchemy, so also the sensuous mind is transmuted into pure mind, by the process of meditation. Distinctions and differences are only

created by the mind. They do not really exist. The lower or the impure mind sports in the objects of the world. The higher or the pure mind rests peacefully in Brahman or the Supreme Self. Brahman is One. It has become many through the mind which divides, differentiates, splits and separates. The dividing wall or partition between man and God or Brahman is mind. An ordinary wall is made up of brick, stone and cement, but this mysterious wall is made up of Vasanas, thoughts, egoism and likes and dislikes. If this mysterious wall is pulled down through enquiry or meditation, you will experience homogenity, unity or oneness only. 'ONE' alone is real. Brahman alone is real. 'MANY' are illusory like snake in the rope or water in the mirage or thief in the post.

"Now, O Rama, listen to a small pleasant story, which was never told before, and which I will briefly narrate to you for your instruction. 'There is a huge and beautiful Vilva fruit which in diameter is as large as the distance of many myriads of miles. It will not decay even in the course of many Kalpas or ages. It has a lasting and sweet flavour as that of honey or celestial nectar. It is extremely soft and palatable. It is the best of all fruits. It is the quintessence of all fruits. It is as firm and fixed as the Mandara mountain and is immovable even by the fierce storms at the end of a Kalpa. It never falls down to the ground. It is never found in an

unripe condition. It is filled with six kinds of savoury substances (Shadrasas).

"'There are millions of worlds within the fruit as its countless seeds. It contains the pith and marrow that support and sustain all living beings. The fleshy part of this marvellous fruit is the limitless Gnana or pure consciousness. The marrow is the Chit-Shakti which generates Akasa, time, space, motion, quarters, law, etc.'"

Rama said: "O venerable sir, this is a beautiful allegory. I have understood the parable of Vilva fruit. The Vilva fruit is Brahman itself. It is the imperishable, illimitable, Sat-Chit-Ananda Parama Atma. It is no other than the all-pervading Gnana or pure intelligence. The rind of the Vilva fruit of Gnana is Brahma's egg and all the worlds."

"Brahman is the most delicious spiritual fruit. It is a mass of Bliss and Knowledge. He who eats or tastes this most wonderful fruit attains immortality," concluded Vasishtha.

THE STORY OF SIKHIDHWAJA

The King Sikhidhwaja was born in the country of Malwa in Dwapara Yuga. He was very just, generous, patient, magnanimous, firm, and virtuous. Chudalai, daughter of the Queen of Sourashtra country, was his wife. Chudalai was endowed with discrimination and Vichara: She did Vichara (enquiry) in the following manner : "What is this 'I'? Who am I? What is my real nature? Whence is this delusion in the mind? To whom it is due? How and whence did it arise? How to destroy this little self-arrogating I? Is there an ultimate Reality that is independent of body and mind, immortal and unchanging? How to attain this ultimate Reality? What is freedom? What is bondage? What is Vidya (Knowledge)? What is Avidya (Ignorance)? What is Maya? What is this Samsara? How to get rid of bondage and Avidya? How to attain eternal bliss, immortality and supreme peace?

"This body is inert. It is composed of five elements. It is perishable. It has a beginning and an end. The term 'I' cannot therefore be applied to it. The term 'I' cannot be applied to the ten organs. The organs are moved by the mind. They are also inert. Prana also cannot be the 'I', because it is also inert. It has come out of Rajas.

The term 'I' cannot be applied to the mind also. Mind also is inert. It has a beginning and an end. It is not self-luminous. It is made up of the Sattwic portion of the Tanmatras or root elements. It is goaded on to action by the intellect. The intellect also is energised by Ahamkara. Therefore it cannot be the 'I'. Ahamkara or egoism is moved by Jiva. Therefore it cannot be 'I'. Jiva also is not 'I', because it is only a reflection. Just as the reflection of the sun in the water vanishes when the water dries up, so also this reflection, Jiva disappears when the mind-lake dries up, *i.e.*, when the mind is annihilated. The Sat-Chit-Ananda Atma or Brahman, the source, the support, the substratum for body, senses, Prana, mind, intellect and Jiva is the real limitless 'I'. I am identical with this Atma or the Immortal Self. Sat-Chit-Ananda is my real nature."

She practised meditation on the Pure, All-pervading Immortal Self and attained self-realisation. She was Gnani and a Yogini too. She had Yogic powers. She could walk in the skies. She had the powers of Anima, etc.

Sikhidhwaja did not believe that his wife was a Gnani and a Yogini. Chudalai tried to give her husband some idea of Atma-Gnana but Sikhidhwaja was not benefitted by her instructions.

Sikhidhwaja led a life of discontentment. He had no peace of mind. He said to Chudalai :

"I derive no pleasure from this mundane life. I am afflicted at heart. I wish to enter the forest life and practise Tapas and meditation. Give me permission." Chudalai said, "My venerable lord, you should not retire at this period of your life." Sikhidhwaja did not pay any attention to Chudalai's words. He left the palace at dead of night, walked for twelve days and entered the forests on the slopes of the Mandara hills. He did severe Tapas, recited Mantras and lived on fruits. His body gradually got emaciated.

Chudalai, when she woke up, did not find her lord who was sleeping by her side. She thought that he had gone to the forest. She was very much afflicted at heart. She herself reigned over the kingdom for eighteen years.

She wanted to see now the condition of her husband. One night she walked in the skies through her Yogic power and alighted on the Mandara hills. She changed her form and appeared before her husband in the form of the son of a great Brahmin as Kumbha Muni (born of a Kumbha or pot). Sikhidhwaja at once got up and saluted the Young Brahmin who stood in the air without touching the ground. Chudalai stood in the air and showed her Yogic power in order to convince Sikhidhwaja of her high attainments in Yoga.

Sikhidhwaja said, "O Kumbha Muni, I did severe Tapas but I have not attained knowledge

of the Self. I have increased the pains." Kumbha Muni replied, "One can enjoy the Eternal Bliss of Atma when he sits at the feet of Guru, hears the Srutis, reflects and meditates on the Mahavakyas or great sentences of the Upanishads. The disciple can enjoy the Eternal Bliss when the Gnana imparted to him by the preceptor ripens in him. Why don't you discuss about the nature of bondage and liberation, in the company of the Sages? Why don't you enquire into the questions as "What art thou?" and how has this world come into existence and how and when it will cease to exist? Why is it that you remain in a state of ignorance and delight in these false play-things of fools and dwell here as an insect in a hole under the ground? Gnana alone is the most excellent of all things. Gnana alone destroys the dire malady of birth and death with its concommittant evils. How is it you do not long after it? Do you wish, O prince, to spend your whole life in doing painful austerities only, as some insects finish their days in boring the wood in which they live? Don't you like to attain Gnana that bestows immortality and supreme eternal peace? Destroy the impure Vasanas, Avidya and its effect by attaining Brahma Gnana and become a Jivanmukta. Virtuous actions remove the impure Vasanas. If the impure Vasanas are destroyed, the mind will be annihilated and knowledge of the Self will dawn in you."

Shikhidhwaja then prostrated before Kumbha

Muni and said, "Please accept me as your disciple. Initiate me into the mysteries of Atma Gnana. Thou art my venerable Guru."

Kumbha Muni said, "O king, please hear from me two stories, the story of a learned man and Chintamani, and the story of the elephant. There lived once a rich man well versed in Sastras. He performed Poojas, prayers and other sacred rites to obtain the Chintamani. He went in search of Chintamani, the crystal gem that bestows anything which one thinks of. He saw the brilliant gem before him. He thought within himself: 'This cannot be Chintamani. Chintamani can be obtained only through severe Tapas. I have not done much Tapas.' He lost this golden opportunity and again roamed about in search of the gem. A Siddha wanted to befool the learned man. He placed a little piece of glass on his way. The fool thought this brittle thing to be the real gem. He picked it up and thought that this would confer on him whatever he wanted. With this belief he gave up in charity all he had. He took this false gem with him and retired into the forest. His deceptive gem was of no use to him. He underwent lot of sufferings and troubles on account of his profound ignorance.

"Hear, O holy hermit, another very interesting story. There lived a huge elephant in the Vindhya mountain. It was entrapped by a certain elephant driver (Mahoot). He fettered it with strong iron chains. It had long sharp tusks. The elephant broke the hard fetters

and ran away. The Mahoot fell on the ground. He dug a big trench and covered it with leaves and grass. The elephant was again entrapped in the trench. He was again tortured by the Mahoot. If the elephant had killed the Mahoot, when he was lying on the ground, it would not have fallen into the trench. Even so all foolish people who have no foresight to prevent their future mishaps and provide against the coming mishaps by their precautions at present, will undoubtedly come to grief like the elephant of the Vindhyas."

Sikhidhwaja said, " O divine boy, Kumbha Muni, please explain to me the significance of the parables of the Chintamani and the elephant." Kumbha Muni replied, " That searcher after the Chintamani had mere theoretical knowledge of the Sastras, but he had no knowledge of the Truth (Tattwagnana). He searched the gem but knew not what it was. The same man is thyself. You have no peace of mind although you are versed in all sacred scriptures. You have renounced your kingdom, your wife and other relatives, wherein there was true Chintamani. You have no idea of true renunciation. Know that it is only by the destruction of egoism and desires that one gets perfection and peace. It is not the abandonment of the world but the desires and egoism that gives everlasting peace and eternal bliss. You have lost the gem of true renunciation; you have chosen the false broken glass piece of painful austerities through

your faulty vision. Therefore, you have no peace of mind. You falsely imagined that you could get peace through Tapas although the priceless Chintamani was before you. You thought in vain that you have obtained the Chintamani but you must have come to find at last that your gain is not worth even a broken piece of glass."

Kumbha Muni continued : "Hear me, O great Prince ! Now I will explain to you the meaning of the story of the elephant of the Vindhya hills. That elephant is thy very Self in this forest. The two long tusks are Vairagya (dispassion) and Viveka (discrimination). The driver is Agnana (ignorance). You are suffering from the pains inflicted by Agnana, just as the elephant which was bound by the Mahoot underwent lot of sufferings. Just as the mighty elephant was bound by the iron chain, so also you are bound by the iron chain of desire. Desires are stronger than iron. Iron rusts and wastes away in time but the desires grow more and more and hold you faster.

"Just as the elephant broke the bonds of iron chains, so also you have broken asunder the ties of your kingdom, sensual enjoyment, wife, relatives, friends, etc. It is possible, O prince, to break down the bonds of iron fetters ; but it is extremely difficult to break the bonds of desires, hopes and expectations. The driver fell down from the howdah. This represents the destruction of your ignorance through your indifference to sensual enjoyment

or dispassion. But your renunciation was not a true one. You have not understood the secret of true renunciation. You have not abandoned everything."

Sikhidhwaja said, " How do you say that I have not abandoned my all when I have given up my kingdom, my palace, my whole wealth and even my dear wife ? Have I not relinquished everything ? Do not all these actions constitute perfect and real renunciation ? What more would you have me relinquished ? "

Kumbha Muni replied : " Though you have abandoned your kingdom, palace, friends, relatives and even your wife, that will not constitute true renunciation. None of these truly belong to you. They come off themselves and go away from you. You have not yet renounced your egoism and desires. You can get rid of your sorrows and can attain eternal bliss and everlasting peace only by abandoning desires and egoism."

Then Sikhidhwaja said : " The forest forms my all at present. These rocks, trees and shrubs form my present possessions. I am quite prepared to abandon all these even, if that would constitute true renunciation."

Kumbha Muni said, " Abandoning of the forest will not constitute true abnegation. Still you have desire and egoism." Sikhidhwaja collected his deer skin, rosary, Kusa grass, earthen vessels and wooden bowl in a pile and set fire to them with dried fuel. He set fire

to his hut of dry leaves. He said to Kumbha Muni : " I think that I have now attained true and perfect renunciation. O divine boy ! Is there anything still to be renounced by me ? What more should I do now ? "

Kumbha Muni replied, " What a great pity ! You have not renounced anything." Sikhidhwaja thought within himself : "I have now got only the body composed of a heap of flesh, blood and bones. I will now ascend to the top of this mountain and let it fall to be dashed to pieces on the ground." Saying thus he ascended to the summit of a high cliff and was about to throw his body down when his monitor Kumbha Muni interrupted him and said, " What a great foolish act are you doing ? Why do you attempt to destroy this innocent body of yours ? How could this body stand in your way of obtaining knowledge of the Self ? Annihilation of this body will not constitute true and perfect renunciation. There is an enemy of this body which agitates it, which puts the body in motion and which produces the seed of all births and Karmas. If you can get rid of this enemy of your body, then only you have truly renounced everything (Sarvatyaga).

Sikhidwaja asked : " Tell me, O Kumbha Muni, what is it then that agitates the body ? What is the root of our re-births ? What is the root of the doings and sufferings of our future lives ? What is it by the avoidance of

which we avoid and abandon everything in this universe of opposites? Tell me, O divine boy, the means by which I can avoid that which moves or agitates this body."

Kumbha Muni replied: "This mind is the root cause for all troubles and sufferings. It is known under the various appellations of Jiva, Prana (life), Buddhi (intellect), Ahamkara (egoism). It generates Sankalpas and makes the Jiva attached to illusory objects. It is the seat of illusion. It is the source of your body. It is neither non-inert nor inert. This ever fluctuating mind forms this world. It produces bondage. Just as the wind agitates the tree, so also this mind agitates and moves this body. This mischievous mind is the germ of all Karmas. He who is under the subjection of his mind is ever subject to cares, worries, anxieties, tribulations and sufferings. It is therefore by your giving up this mind that you really abandon everything in this world. Abnegation of the mind constitutes true renunciation. This alone will help you in the attainment of eternal bliss and knowledge of the Self. When you get knowledge of Self, you will become identical with Brahman or Parama Atma."

Sikhidhwaja said: "O Muni! What is this mind? What is its true nature? What is the cause of this mind? How can I annihilate this mischievous mind?"

Kumbha Muni replied: "Mind is a bundle

of Vasanas. The true nature of the mind consists in the Vasanas. Mind and Vasana are synonymous terms. It is very difficult for the ignorant to get rid of the Vasanas or subtle desires. Ahamkara or egoism is the seed of the tree of mind. The mind is the locomotive engine of the body. It is the bee that flutters about the lotus of the heart. The sprout that germinates from the seed of Ahamkara is Buddhi (intellect). The body is the stem of this tree of the mind. Sankalpas are the ramifying branches. They originate from the sprout, Buddhi. Manas assumes the four forms *viz.*, Mind, Chitta, Buddhi, Ahamkara according to the functions it performs. When it does Sankalpa-Vikalpa it is mind; when it remembers a thing it is Chitta; when it determines it is Buddhi; when it self-arrogates, it is egoism. Chop off the branches of the tree of mind daily and finally destroy the tree at its root completely. The chopping of the branches is only secondary. The primary thing is to root out the noxious tree at once. The branches of Vasanas will produce countless crops of Karmas. Destroy the Vasanas with the sword of Gnana. You will enjoy peace. Burn Ahamkara, the seed of the tree of mind."

Sikhidhwaja said, "Tell me, O venerable Muni, what is that fire which can burn the seed of the tree of mind?" Kumbha Muni replied, "The fire that can burn Ahamkara, the seed of the tree of mind, is Brahma Gnana or

knowledge of the Self which is obtained through enquiry of the true nature of 'I' or 'Who am I'".

Sikhidhwaja said, "O Sage! I have repeatedly enquired into the origin of 'I' in a variety of ways. I am neither this body nor the Prana, neither this mind nor the intellect, neither the organs nor the egoism."

Kumbha Muni said, "If you are none of these, what you think of yourself in reality? If 'I' were not all these, what else was it?" Sikhidhwaja answered, "I feel myself, O most venerable sage, to be that intelligent and pure soul or absolute consciousness. I am unable to get rid of my egoism, the seed of the mind. I try my level best to annihilate it. The more I try to abandon it the more it clings to me."

Kumbha Muni said, "Every effect is produced from some cause or other. This is the general law of nature everywhere. Find out the cause of Ahamkara. Explore into the cause of your egoism and tell me what it is."

Sikhidhwaja replied, "Mere illusion (Maya) is the cause of my egoism. Knowledge is the cause of egoism. Tell me, O divine boy, about the means of suppressing my thoughts of external objects. How can I avoid these external appearances or names and forms?"

Kumbha Muni said: "If you tell me the cause of knowledge, then I shall be able to xplain to you the process of cause and effect

and the method of suppressing the thoughts and destroying egoism."

Sikhidhwaja said, "Knowledge is produced through the illusory objects such as the body, tree, river, mountains, cow, horse, etc. If the objects do not exist, we can neither think of nor know anything. If there are no objects, we will have no knowledge of objects at all. Then, egoism, the seed of Manas will be absorbed."

Kumbha Muni said : "If the body and the other objects exist, then knowledge of the visible also exists. As the body and the objects do not really exist, what then is the basis of knowledge? If you depend on your body as a real existence, then tell me, O prince, on what does your knowledge depend, when your soul is separated from the body?"

Sikhidhwaja replied : "The body which is seen by everybody and which enjoys the fruits of all Karmas cannot be taken for an unreality by anybody. Who can ignore the body which is clearly seen by all, which is endowed with hands, legs and which performs various kinds of actions. How can we say that the body does not exist?"

Kumbha Muni replied, "The body does not exist before its birth, there is no body after its dissolution. That which does not exist in the beginning and in the end, which appears only in the middle is illusory and really non-existent. This body which is produced through Karmas

is not itself the cause. Consequently, the effect of intelligence is itself non-existent. Nothing can be said to exist, which is not produced by some cause. The knowledge or consciousness that we have of it is itself illusory. Therefore Ahamkara and other effects which are produced through the delusion of knowledge are also non-existent. Whatever product appears to present itself to any one without its true cause is as false as mirage in the sand. All objects which are not of the nature of causes are false like silver in the mother of pearl or man in the post. Believing in the true existence of body and egoism is as decorating the body of a barren woman's son."

Sikhidhwaja said, "Can we not take our fathers as the causes and generators of our bodies ?"

Kumbha Muni replied, "The father cannot be the cause. He has another cause for himself."

Sikhidhwaja said, "We can certainly regard our parents as the causes of our production. Our parents had our grandfathers and grandmothers for the causes of their births. We should regard Brahma, our first great-grandfather as the prime progenitor of the human race. Am I not right in my statement, O revered Kumbha Muni ?"

Kumbha Muni replied, "The prime progenitor, the great-grandfather Brahma, cannot be the original cause as He also is in need

of a cause for his birth. The Non-dual, Self-existent, Self-luminous Para Brahman alone shines prior to creation. This universe is mere appearance. It appears just as water appears in the mirage. Therefore to think that Brahma is the Creator is a wrong conception indeed. The existence of a great grand father is false. There is nothing as creation. The creation of all creatures is also false. (This is from the view point of the Absolute.)

Sikhidhwaja said, "Certainly Para Brahman is the cause of Brahma. Is this not true? O venerable Muni!"

Kumbha Muni replied, "Para Brahman is that which is birthless, deathless, causeless, changeless, timeless, actionless, beginningless and endless. He cannot be the cause. He can neither be actor nor enjoyer. There is only one living Reality. That is Brahman. Destroy the Avidya by attaining knowledge of Brahman. The whole universe will vanish *in toto*. You will behold only the Self or Atma everywhere."

Sikhidhwaja said, "O venerable teacher! I now perceive the truth. I feel now that I am the pure, all-pervading, free, immortal soul or Atma. I am calm. I am settled in the All-blissful Self. The visible universe does not really exist. Maya cannot touch me. I am Brahman. I am the indivisible self-resplendent Self. I am absorbed in Brahman."

Kumbha Muni said : " The words of the preceptor will be lodged in the mind of the disciple only if he is endowed with the four means of salvation, if he is calm and serene, if he is dispassionate and introspective and if he has controlled the senses. You are full of enlightnment. You have attained the goal. You are shining with knowledge of the Self."

Sikhidhwaja said, "O venerable Guru ! The liberated sages work for the solidarity or well being of the world. Do they not perform actions through the mind ? How can one work without a mind ? Please enlighten me on this point."

Kumbha Muni replied, Manas (Mind) is said to be of two kinds, the pure and the impure. That which is associated with the thought of desire is the impure, while that which is without desire is the pure. The pure mind is otherwise known by the name 'higher mind.' The impure mind is called as lower mind. To men, their mind alone is the cause of bondage or emancipation. That mind which is attracted by objects of sense tends to bondage, while that which is not so attracted tends to emancipation. Now in as much as to a mind without a desire for sensual objects, there is stated to be salvation. therefore an aspirant after emancipation should render his mind ever free from all longing after material objects.

" The impure or Asuddha Manas is filled with impure Vasanas and Rajas and Tamas and

the pure mind or Suddha Manas is filled with pure Vasanas and Sattwa. The impure Vasanas generate re-births. The pure mind with pure Vasanas leads to Moksha or liberation from births and deaths. The worldly minded persons work with the lower or the impure mind. They are bound by their Karmas. The liberated Sages work with the pure or the Sattwic mind (higher mind). They are not bound by their Karmas as they have no egoism and as they do not expect fruits for their actions.

"The impure mind is unsteady. It ever fluctuates. It jumps from one object to another. It ever hankers after sensual objects. It is filled with various sorts of fears and pains. The pure mind is steady. It does Brahma Vichara. It rests in the Supreme Self. It does not move towards sensual objects. It is free from all sorts of fears and pains.

"The impure mind is no other than the Vasanas (subtle desires) that generate countless births. The mind becomes a prey to various kinds of desires through its fluctuation. Fluctuation is caused by Rajas and Viksepa Shakti. When the mind fluctuates, it wanders from one object to another object.

"An Agnani or worldly minded man is swayed by the impure mind. He acts according to the dictates of the lower or the impure mind. But a sage or Gnani keeps his mind under his perfect control. He acts in accordance with the voice of his intuition.

" Just as a washerman removes dirt through dirt, just as a traveller removes the thorn in his foot through another thorn, so also the impure mind should be slain by the pure mind.

" He who has annihilated the lower or the impure mind drives away re-births to a great distance from him. No pains will affect him. The pure Vasanas with which the sage performs actions cannot produce re-births for him.

" All impure Vasanas are fried *in toto* when you get the knowledge of the Self or Brahma Gnana. Meditation, Japa, Kirtan, practice of Pranayama, Brahma Vichara, study of religious books and Sat-sanga generate pure Vasanas.

" When the mind is freed from the desires for objects and when it rests in the Self or Atma, you will enjoy Eternal Bliss. When the mind is freed from all cravings or longings for objects, when it is controlled in the heart, and when it attains the reality of the Atma, you will attain Moksha or the final beatitude of life.

" O prince ! do not allow your mind to fluctuate. Render your mind ever free from all longings after material objects. Annihilate the impure or lower mind with the help of the pure or the higher mind and transcend the higher mind also. May you be as firm as a rock ! May you be endowed with the pure or the Sattwic mind ! May you ever rest peacefully in All-blissful Self ! "

Sikhidhwaja said, "O venerable Guru, tell me something regarding the origin and destruction of this universe : how can we intermingle the conception of the individual Soul or mundane Soul with the idea of Brahman or the Supreme Soul which is ever pure and Self-luminous ?" Kumbha Muni replied, " All the visibles are perishable. They are extinct at the end of every Pralaya or Mahakalpa. Brahman alone which is quiet, all-pervading, indestructible, full of bliss, pure and bright ever exists. Just as the water becomes the wave at a certain time, so also this world rises and falls in the Supreme Self or Brahman. Just as bracelets, rings and various kinds of ornaments come out of gold, so also this world of names and forms comes out of Brahman. This universe is nothing but the non-dual Chinmatra (Absolute consciousness) just as the wave is nothing but water of the ocean.

" Brahman, Siva, Satyam, Chinmatra, Sat and Chit, are all synonymous terms. A slight motion in the mind generates this world. If you attain Self-realisation the universe will disappear. Just as the snake appears on the rope, so also this illusory world appears in Brahman. This world is Vivarta of Brahman, just as rings, bracelets, etc., are Vivarta of gold. For an Agnani alone, this world is real. If you practise deep meditation you will develop divine vision and will behold Brahman or the Supreme Self through direct intuitive perception.

" Brahman alone is the real existence. He is the Soul of All. He is all in all. He is the essence of this universe. He is a unity that never admits of a duality under all the varieties and diversities in nature.

" It is useless to make an enquiry regarding the nature of the world and our egoism, because they do not really exist; they are mere illusory appearances like snake in the rope. The feeling of egoism and the term world are meaningless words only and mere creations or inventions of men. The words ' I ', ' thou ', ' this ', and 'that' are mere inventions of men to distinguish one from another. They are only coinings of our imagination. They do not really exist. The knowledge of ' I ', ' thou ', ' he ', ' this world ', ' that ', ' this ', etc., is like the appearance of our dreams."

Sikhidhwaja said, " O venerable sage, I understand that there is no other thing as mind also."

Kumbha Muni replied, " The world does not really exist. There is no such real entity as the mind at any time and in any space whatsoever. How can there be a mind where there is no world in existence? This world is the essence of the one Brahman only. There is no world apart from Brahman. Whatever is manifest here before us exists in Brahman. Just as the wind merges in the air, just as ornaments melt in gold, so this world merges in Brahman. The sage does not behold this

world. He beholds only the Self everywhere. This world appears only in the sight of ignorant men. This world is as false as a circle described by the whirling flame of a torch. Mind is another name for ignorance. Mind is nothing. An unreality appears as a reality. The gross desire which causes men to take re-births is known by the name mind.

"O prince! Always identify yourself with Brahman who is unborn, beginningless, endless, decayless, indivisible, eternal, ever tranquil and rest peacefully for ever."

Sikhidhwaja said, "O sage, tell me how the Jivammuktas or liberated men conduct themselves in this world."

Kumbha Muni replied, "The liberated sages are free from longings or desires. They have annihilated their minds. They have their senses under perfect restraint. They are endowed with virtuous qualities. They possess equanimity (Samata) or evenness of disposition and equal vision at all times. They have no desire for heaven and for rewards for their actions. They keep a balanced mind under all circumstances of life."

Sikhidhwaja said: "Tell me, O venerable Guru, how can the motion of a thing be one and the same with its immobility?"

Kumbha Muni replied, "There is only one thing. This is Brahman. This is the only essence. This is all-pervading, inexpressible,

inconceivable and attributeless. One can attain the knowledge of the Self through long study of books which deal with Atma Gnana, Satsanga (association with the sages) and constant meditation.

" This Self is as the water of the ocean, and is agitated by its intelligence, just as the water of the ocean is moved by great waves. This Brahman is seen in the form of the universe by the ignorant. The intellect is ever busy and active but the Self is motionless and inactive. A slight vibration in the intellect generates the universe. The intellect forms the moving principle of the universe. When intellect ceases functioning, this seeming universe vanishes, Brahman alone shines, all motion ceases and the immobile Brahman alone exists. O prince, thou art this Immortal, Immovable, All-blissful Brahman. Know this and rest in Samadhi like an immovable rock."

Sikhidhwaja sat as quiet as a statue, entered into Samadhi and remained in this state for full three days.

Kumbha Muni took the form of Chudalai, moved in the sky through the Yogic power and reached her palace. She discharged the royal duties of her absent Lord. After three days, she journeyed through Akasa, assumed the form of Kumbha Muni and went to the hermitage of Sikhidhwaja in the forest. She found that the prince was in a state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. She wished to awaken him from his Samadhi.

She roared like a lion. This startled the wild beasts but this did not rouse the prince from his Samadhi. Then she shook him with her hands to bring him back to his senses. Then she threw him down on the ground and yet the prince neither awoke nor came back to his senses.

She thought within herself thus, "I see that my Lord is absorbed in the Supreme Self. I will now concentrate on his subtle body and find out through my eye of intuition whether there is residue of Sattwa or intelligence or life in his heart. If there is residue of Sattwa or life, I will wake him up through another method and live with him happily. Otherwise I will also give up this body and attain Videha Mukti or disembodied salvation."

Chudalai concentrated her mind on the subtle or astral body of the prince and through her inner eye of intuition (Divya Chakshu) found out that there was still residue of Sattwa or intelligence or relic of his life in his heart.

Chudalai did the Yogic Kriya or Parakaya Pravesha (entering into another's body). She abandoned the physical form of Kumbha Muni, withdrew her subtle body and entered into the mind of Sikhidhwaja, and caused that part of the mind which contained the residue of pure Sattwa to vibrate. She put that part of the mind in action and motion. Then she returned to her own body just as a bird flits on the twig of a tree and comes back to its own nest again.

She then sat upon a flowery bed and chanted the Sama Veda songs in a melodious manner. The prince experienced an intellectual exhilaration on hearing the songs, and his dorment life gradually blossomed, just as the lotus bud blossoms at the sight of the sun. He slowly opened his eye lids. The whole body of the prince was filled with renewed life. He beheld Kumbha Muni before him and praised him. He said, "Through thy grace I have enjoyed the bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. I have attained liberation from the trammels of births and deaths. The pleasures of heaven are nothing when compared to the bliss of Samadhi."

Kumbha Muni said, "O prince! Are you free now from all pains, doubts and delusions? Have you fully tasted the Eternal Bliss of Brahman? Are you free from love and hatred towards sensual objects? Have you developed equal vision. Have you rooted out your longing for the sensual pleasures of this earth?"

Sikhidhwaja replied, "O venerable Guru! I am absolutely free from all sorts of pains, doubts, fears, errors, delusions, love and hatred. I am freed from decay, death and disease. I have gained all which is to be gained. I am quite contented in my own Self. I enjoy supreme satisfaction. I have nothing to know that is unknown to me, and nothing to obtain that is not obtained by me. There is nothing more for me to long to see or hear. I do not want any further advice, from any one

for my enlightenment. I am endowed with equal vision for all."

Then Kumbha Muni and Sikhidhwaja wandered happily in forests and hills. They saw many lakes and rivers. Kumbha Muni said to the prince, " To-day there will be a big festival in Devaloka. I must present myself before Narada in that assembly. My departure is ordained by destiny. It cannot be averted by any means. Who can go against the force of irresistible law ? I shall positively return at sunset." He gave a bunch of flowers to Sikhidwaja and parted from him.

Kumbha Muni assumed the form of Chudalai, journeyed in the sky, reached her city and discharged her royal duties. She reassumed the form of Kumbha Muni, moved in the air and got down at Sikhidhwaja's abode.

Sikhidhwaja said, " O venerable sir ! Why are you sad to-day ? Thou art a sage." Kumbha Muni replied : " Knowers of truth who are not firm and patient under trying conditions are not truthful men. They are imposters. As long as we have our bodies, we must exert our bodily organs in the proper manner. Even the great Brahma and the gods are subject to the conditions of their bodies. No one can go against the irresistible supreme law. It is beyond the power of anyone to check the force of destiny which makes all things to run in their destined course, as the waters of rivers run into the ocean."

Sikhidhwaja said, "If such is the case, why should you be sorry for anything that has befallen to you?"

Kumbha Muni replied, "Hear O prince! the amazing accident that has befallen on me. You will be struck with wonder indeed!"

Chudalai wanted to test Shikhidhwaja whether he was established in Brahmacharya or not. She narrated an incident to the prince: "After I gave the bunch of flowers to you, I journeyed on in the air and I went to my father in Devaloka and attended the court of Indra. Then I entered the region of air in order to come down to the earth. I met with Rishi Durvasa. I told him: 'You are wrapped in your blue vest of clouds. You seem to move in haste as an amorous woman to meet her lover.' Hearing this, the sage became angry, cursed me and said: 'Be thou transformed every night into an amorous woman.' How shameful have I been before the sages! I shall hereafter have to assume the body of a female every night. I am very much pained over the matter."

Sikhidhwaja said, "Do not feel sorry, O Muni! No one can go against the force of irresistible law. You are a sage. You are the changeless soul. This transformation of the body will not affect the intangible soul. The soul or Atma undergoes no change."

Chudalai spent the days in the form of Kumbha Muni and the nights in a female form.

One day Kumbha Muni said, " How long am I to remain as a virgin ? I will choose you as my husband. Be pleased to accept me for your wife every night."

Sikhidhwaja said, " You are at liberty to do as you like."

" Then the marriage was celebrated on the Mandara hills in the Gandharva form by mutual choice and consent on the day of the full-moon in the month of Simha (August-September). Chudalai was known by the name Madanika now.

On every third night, when Madanika found the prince to be just asleep, she used to assume her previous form and go to her state to discharge the royal duties. She returned to her husband in the forest after the duties of the state were over.

Chudalai who was known by the name of Madanika wanted to test Sikhidhwaja. Through her Yogic power, she made Indra appear before Sikhidhwaja. Indra said, " O king, I am very much attracted by your Tapas and virtuous qualities. Come to Devaloka. The celestial maidens Rambha and others are awaiting your arrival there. Plunge yourself in all sorts of enjoyments there."

Sikhidhwaja replied, " O Indra ! Wherever I am; there is Swarga for me. I have known

all the pleasures of Devaloka. I do not want anything." Sikhidhwaja remained with perfect equanimity of mind. He was quite indifferent.

Chudalai wanted to test Sikhidhwaja further. She entered a bower and created through her Yogic power a lover. She made a show of embracing him. Sikhidhwaja sought for her in the gardens and groves and at last found her and her pretty paramour in mutual embrace. But he was not in the least affected. He felt no change in his disposition. He did not show any sign of anger.

Chudalai in order to find out his behaviour appeared before Sikhidhwaja with a bashful countenance as if ashamed of her past misconduct. Sikhidhwaja spoke to Chudalai with a sweet voice, "Why do you come so soon to me? O lady! Return to your lover and satisfy your passion. Do not think that I am angry or sorry for this affair. I am always contented in my own Self."

Chudalai alias Madanika said, "I am but a frail woman. I am ignorant. I cannot check my passion. Woman is by nature ten times more passionate than men. Neither prohibition nor the threatening of man, nor regard of chastity is of any use to check her from lust. Please forgive me. Forgiveness is the most important quality of pious men."

Sikhidhwaja replied, "O sweet Madanika!

Anger has no seat in my heart, just as a tree has no seat in the sky."

Chudalai did not want to test Sikhidhwaja any further. She thought that her husband had attained knowledge of the Self and that he was absolutely free from passion and anger. She gave up the body of Madanika and assumed the form of Chudalai and appeared before Sikhidhwaja.

Sikhidhwaja said, "O lady! Who are you?"

Chudalai said, "I am Chudalai, thy lawfully wedded wife. I assumed the forms of Kumbha Muni and Madanika through my Yogic power and initiated you into the mysteries of Kaivalya or Atma Gnana. I remonstrated with thee on thy mistaken course and used every art and trick to take thee to the right path. I tested you in diverse ways and sounded the depth of your knowledge. Now enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi and you will know everything in detail."

Sikhidhwaja sat for meditation. He saw vividly the whole affair that had happened from the date of his abandoning the kingdom down to his meeting with Chudalai at the end.

Chudalai said, "O venerable lord! Are you free from all doubts? Has thy delusion caused by ignorance been destroyed? Are you

resting in your own Swaroopa? Are you enjoying the bliss of the Eternal?"

Sikhidhwaja replied, "I am now free from distractions, errors, doubts and delusion. I am liberated from the trammels of the world. I am always tranquil. I have no desires. I do not expect anything from anybody. I have nothing to choose for myself. I am neither this nor that, nor am I glad nor sorry at any thing or at any event in the world. I am always resting in my own blissful self. Nothing can distract my peace. I am free from dualities, distinctions and differences. I do not think of objects. I am all-pervading, pure consciousness. I am like the omnipresent ether. I am like Akasa which permeates like objects and is yet untainted."

Chudalai said, "My venerable lord, resume the regal duties now. You will not be bound by Karmas."

Sikhidhwaja agreed. Then Chudalai annointed him and performed the rites of his installation to his kingdom. She installed him on a beautiful throne with gems and blessed him with a long life. Then Sikhidhwaja and Chudalai mounted upon a nicely decorated elephant and went back to their own town, accompanied by two regiments on both sides and attended by bands of musicians playing in harmony with the singing and dancing party. He entered his royal palace with all his retinue and was

welcomed by his ministers, courtiers and attendants. He reigned over his kingdom for a period of 1000 years and then attained Videha Mukti together with his wife about the same time.

Hearing the above story of Sikhidhwaja so beautifully narrated to him by his Guru Vasishtha, Sri Rama asked of him thus : " How can there be residue of Sattwa in those who have merged themselves in Brahman, and who have annihilated their minds? How can there be the little spark of the vital flame or the relic of life in a Yogi whose mind is as cold as stone and whose body is as callous as a clod of earth or a block of wood ? "

Vasishtha replied, " The relic of life or the residue of Sattwa, the cause for intelligence, remains in the heart as an imperceptible atom, just as flowers and fruits are latent in a seed. There is vibration of intellect in a Yogi who is calm and who remains as a statue or a rock in Samadhi. Though the mind of a Jivan-mukta is annihilated, yet the subtle body is not altogether destroyed. His mind is not affected by the pleasures and pains. It has no craving or longing for objects. Though his mind moves among sense objects it is free from attraction and repulsion."

Vasishtha further said, " O Rama ! Follow in the footsteps of this prince who ruled the kingdom till he attained Videha Mukti. Do your regal duties. Have equal vision and

balanced mind. Be indifferent amidst pleasures. Be free from anxiety amidst pains. Have no attachment. Have no longing for objects. Never be sorry if you get difficulties and troubles. You will not be affected by anything. Karmas will not bind you. You will attain Moksha. You will get knowledge of the Self. You will enjoy eternal bliss and supreme peace."

THE STORY OF IKSHWAKU

Rama said, "O all-knowing sage, please tell me what are the characteristics of a mind that has lost its egoism, that has perished, but yet retains its spiritual form only?"

Vasishtha replied, "Desires, illusions, pride, ignorance and other impurities can never touch a person who has annihilated egoism and mind, who has knowledge of Atma just as water of the lake cannot come in contact with the lotus leaf. The purity of the soul appears vividly in the bright and placid countenance of a man, after his egoism and its accompanying faults are all destroyed. All divine qualities beam in his face. The ties of passions and affections are cut asunder. All sins are destroyed. He is free from anger, covetousness and Vasanas. The five organs are under his perfect control. Afflictions fail to affect him. Joys cease to elate him. He is endowed with perfect calmness of mind, harmony, beauty, contentment and equanimity of mind in all conditions and places. He has equal vision over all. Even when pains touch his body and exhibit on his face, his mind is ever calm and peaceful. He becomes a favourite of the Devas. He never opposes nor offends anybody. He is loved and honoured by everyone. The illusions of the world cannot touch him. Neither wealth nor poverty, neither prosperity nor adversity

can ever affect him. He is quite indifferent. Acursed is the man who is drowned in ignorance or worldliness, who does not long for and attain that supreme Self which can be realised through knowledge or Atma Gnana and which serves to save him from all the difficulties of this world. Knowledge of the Self supports a man admist all earthly calamities.

" He who wishes to cross this ocean of Samsara and attain the eternal bliss by getting over the waves of his miserable transmigrations in the vast ocean of this world must always enquire : ' Who am I ? What is this world ? What is the nature of Brahman or the Supreme Self ? Of what use are material enjoyments ? ' Such a discriminative enquiry is the best means for the attainment of final emancipation or freedom (Moksha).

" Know, O Rama, how the renowned king Ikshwaku, the first founder of your race, managed to attain Moksha. Once upon a time when this monarch was reigning over his kingdom he came to think upon the state of humanity in one of his solitary hours. He thought within himself as to what might be the cause of decay, disease and death, and also of sorrow, pleasure and pain, and likewise of the errors to which all living beings are subject to in this mortal world. He pondered long over these thoughts but was unable to find a solution.

" He went to the first Manu who came down from Brahma-loka, paid due respects to him

and said, 'O Lord of Mercy! How can I extricate myself from the pains of this Samsara? What is the nature of my real Self? How can I attain the Immortal or the Infinite? Whence is the origin of this universe? What is its form? When and how did it come into existence? How may I be extricated from my doubts and erroneous opinions regarding this creation? How may I be released from this world like a bird from its nest?

"Manu replied, 'All these that you see are not real. All these paltry universes do not really exist. They are phenomenal. They resemble the castles in the clouds and the water in the mirage of sandy deserts. The mind also is unreal. Atma or Brahman that is beyond the reach of mind and the senses, that is indestructible, unlimited by space and more subtle than ether always exists. It is the only reality. All the visible objects are mere reflections in the mirror of Atma. Some Shaktis or inherent powers of Brahman joined together and assumed the forms of the luminous worlds; while other Shaktis assumed the forms of living beings. Some assumed the form of Devalokas. There is no such thing as bondage or Moksha (emancipation). Brahman alone is without pains. He is all in all. Brahman alone shines as this heterogenous world with diverse objects, just as the water of the ocean appears as waves, bubbles, foam, etc. Nothing else is but the non-dual Brahman. It is the only Reality. It is the only living Truth. Therefore

leave aside, O Ikshwaku! your thoughts of bondage and freedom. Mayest thou be free from all sorts of fears and be as adamant and firm as a rock.

"'If one associated himself with the thoughts of Sankalpas, he becomes a Jiva or the individual soul, just as the water of the ocean becomes the waves or foam. Then he will ever be whirling in the cycle of birth and death. Pains and pleasures are attributes of the mind and not of Atma. The Jivas retain the tendencies of their prior states in former births, do virtuous and vicious actions and reap the fruits of their actions, *viz.*, pleasure or pain. Just as the invisible node of Rahu becomes visible to us in the eclipse of the moon, so also the mind acting under the impulse of the soul becomes visible to us and experiences pleasure and pain. This immortal Self cannot be attained through Atma Gnana books and spiritual preceptors. It can be intuitively cognised through one's Self and his intelligence. Just as travellers move about without any attachment to any particular object or spot, so also be quite unconcerned with your body and senses. Do not love or hate your body and organs. Do not torture your body or senses. Be indifferent towards the body, senses and all objects. Body and organs are the result of Karma. You cannot avoid them. They will inevitably come into being. Give up the longing for objects. Attain serenity and become Brahman.

"'The Self 's identification of 'I' with this perishable body is the cause of our bondage in this world. Therefore this conception should never be entertained by those who are seekers of their liberation. But the firm conviction, "I am the All-pervading Soul or Brahman" is able to extricate men from their bondage in this world. Just as a mother is troubled at heart by searching for the missing child which is really sleeping on her shoulders, so also all people are afflicted by searching for their happiness in external perishable objects which can be easily found in their own Self within. Just as the water in the ocean is agitated by the waves, so also the mind is agitated by countless Sankalpas. If the Sankalpas are destroyed, if you fix your mind, O king! in Atma, you will enjoy Supreme Peace and Eternal Bliss, and will remain quite immovable even amidst the tossing waves of this terrible ocean of Samsara.

"'This illusory world arises out of Brahman. Maya is mysterious. It deludes men from realising their own Atma. This world appears as a solid reality through the influence of Maya. Those who have no Atma Gnana are afflicted in this world. He who looks on the world as a scenery painted on the canvas of mind and remains unimpressed and undesirous of everything and quite contented in his soul, has put on an invulnerable armour. No arrow or bullet can pierce this armour. How happy is he who having nothing, no wealth or

support, has yet his all by realising his own Self. Annihilate all desires, contemplate on Brahman and become a Jivanmukta. Destroy this little 'I'. Do not identify with the perishable body but identify with the All-pervading Supreme Self. Develop the idea of Abhava (non-existence) and meditate on all objects as formless and as pure consciousness. The idea, 'This is pleasurable' or 'That is painful', 'This is good' or 'That is bad' is the seed of a series of pains. If this seed is burnt up by the fire of equal vision, then where will be the room for pains? Exert and wear the sword of Abhava. Cut by the axe of equal vision the feeling of the agreeable and disagreeable and the sensation of love and hatred.

"'Clear the entangled jungle of ceremonious rites by the tool of your disregard of the merit and demerit of actions. Annihilate all thoughts and objects through the sword of Abhava. Drive all differences from your mind. Develop discrimination. Realise the Supreme Bliss of the Soul. Remain quite calm. Be free from all cares and fears of the world. He who has destroyed this little 'I', all desires and Sankalpas, who has melted all illusory differences will enjoy the Eternal Bliss of Brahman. He alone will be free from pains and sorrows. O king! Contemplate always on that All-full, quiescent, spotless and changeless Atma which is equal in all.'

"Manu continued, 'There are seven stages

of Gnana or the seven Gnana Bhumikas. First, Gnana should be developed through a deep study of Atma-Gnana Sastras and association with the wise and the performance of virtuous actions without any expectation of fruits. This Subheccha or good desire forms the first Bhumika or stage of Gnana. This will irrigate the mind with the waters of discrimination and protect it. There will be non-attraction or indifference to sensual objects in this stage. The first stage is the substratum of the other stages. From it the next two stages *viz.*, Vicharana and Tanumanasi will be reached. Constant Atma Vichara (Atmic enquiry) forms the second stage. The third stage is Tanumanasi. This is attained through the cultivation of special indifference to objects. The mind becomes thin like a thread. Hence the name Tanumanasi. Tanu means thread,—thread-like state of mind. The third stage is also known by the name Asanga Bhavana. In the third stage, the aspirant is free from all attractions. If any one dies in the third stage, he will remain in heaven for a long time and will reincarnate on earth again as a Gyani. The above three stages can be included under the Jagrata state. The fourth stage is Satwapatti. This stage will destroy all Vasanas to the root. This can be included under the Swapna state. The world appears like a dream. Those who have reached the fourth stage will look upon all things of the universe with an equal eye. The fifth stage is Asamasakti. There is perfect non-attachment

to the objects of the world. There is no Upadhi of waking or sleeping in this state. This is the Jivanmukti stage in which there is the experience of Ananda Swaroopa (the Eternal Bliss of Brahman) replete with spotless Gnana. This will come under Sushupti. The sixth stage is Padartha Bhavana. There is knowledge of Truth. The seventh stage is Turiya or the state of super-consciousness. This is Moksha. This is also known by the name Turiyateeta. There are no Sankalpas. All the Gunas disappear. This is above the reach of mind and speech. Disembodied salvation (Videhamukti) is attained in the seventh stage.

"'A Jivanmukta is free from egoism, desires, Gunas and attachment. He has equal vision. He enjoys perfect peace and eternal bliss. Therefore he will never be afflicted in mind. Whether engaged in business or retired from it, whether living with a family or leading a single life, the man who identifies himself with the Immortal Self or Brahman and who has nothing to fear, or care or to be sorry for in this world, is regarded as liberated in this life. He who knows himself to be without beginning and end, decay and death, and to be of the nature of pure consciousness, remains always quiet and composed in himself and has no cause for sorrow at all. He who gets rid of his knowledge that 'This is I', 'That is another', 'This is mine', and 'That is another's', soon attains knowledge of the Self.

"'Enjoyment of an object through one's Vasanas gives immediately pleasure. When the object perishes he experiences pain. If Vasanas are completely destroyed or if they decay little by little, you will not experience any pleasure in objects. The presence or absence of something is the cause of pleasure or pain of men in general. Pleasures and pains are inseparable. Pleasure is the cause of pain. If the Vasanas decay, the Karmas will not produce pleasures or pains. They become like burnt seeds. He who has no attraction for objects will have a cool heart. Then the cotton pods of Karmas, Sanchita and Agami will be broken and scattered away from the cotton plant of this body with its nine gates by the whirlwind of knowledge. All thoughts will vanish. The germ of knowledge growing in the mind will increase itself day by day, just as the corn sown in fertile ground will soon shoot forth into the paddy plant. Atma will shine in its pristine purity and splendour. Know thyself, O king, as the Pure, non-dual Brahman wherein there are neither thoughts nor Vasanas.'

"Manu continued, 'The soul is originally full of bliss by its nature, but being subject to ignorance, it fosters its vain desire for material enjoyment. Therefore it has the name of Jiva or the individual soul which is subjected to misery. Desires arise through non-discrimination (A-viveka). They will vanish when discrimination dawns. When desires are

destroyed, the state of Jiva becomes extinct. His soul becomes one with the Supreme Soul.

"'Do not, therefore, allow your desire of earthly enjoyment to draw your soul up and down to heaven and hell, just as a bucket tied in its neck with a cord is cast down and again lifted up from a well. Those who have the idea of agency and ownership, who are deluded by the false differentiation of 'I', 'he', 'this', 'that', 'this is mine', 'that is yours', etc., are destined like the bucket to descend lower and lower. The more selfish a man is the more degraded and base he is.

"'Stand firm on the rock of Truth or Brahman. Think that this universe is your all-full form. Have a firm grip of your real Self. When you attain the Gnana vision of unity then only you can free yourself from re-births and become identical with the Supreme Self. You will be able to perform whatever is done by Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. When your mind is elevated and expanded beyond all limits, it then becomes identical with the divine mind and is absorbed in it. The same state attained by Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra is also attained by you when you get knowledge of Atma. All the phenomena of nature are mere sporting of Brahman. He who enjoys the Eternal Bliss of Atma is unparalleled and unique. He has none to compare with him.

"'This world neither exists nor non-exists.

It is neither of the nature of Atma or non-Atma. It is neither a vacuum nor a plenum. When Brahman is realised, Maya vanishes. Moksha is the attainment of Eternal Bliss. Moksha is freedom from births and deaths. Moksha is Brahman. Moksha has neither space nor time in itself. There is no state in it either external or internal. If Ahamkara, (egoism) or personal existence is annihilated, Moksha is attained. The end of thoughts is Moksha. The end of Maya is Moksha. Realisation of Brahman (Sakshatkara) constitutes Moksha or liberation.

" ' He alone who is indifferent as to what he wears or eats or where he sleeps will shine as an emperor of the whole world. Free yourself from the castes, orders of life and the Dharmas of the world just as a lion frees itself from the iron cage. Lighten the burden of Samsara. Attain the immaculate seat which is imperishable. Become perfectly serene and free yourself from re-births. Then you will enjoy the Eternal Bliss of Brahman with perfect equanimity and quiescence of mind.

" ' Such a person is a Jivanmukta. He will be indifferent to the fruits of actions. Whether honoured or slighted by men, he neither praises nor is displeased with them. He hurts nobody nor is hurt by any. He is free from attachment of any kind. Though his body is cut asunder he will not be affected by pain. He is above injunctions and prohibitions and yet he will

act in accordance with the dictates of the Vedas. He may work in the world like an ordinary man, but he has no idea of agency. He is completely disconnected in mind with worldly concerns. He works for the well-being of the world. He is not an object of fear for anybody and he is not afraid of anybody. Such a person should be honoured and adored. Such a person always rests in the Supreme Self whether he dies in a holy place like Benares or in the house of a Chandala or an outcaste.

"'Persons should worship with great reverence such glorious persons who have raised themselves to the status of Brahmanhood. They are gods on this earth. It is the duty of those who want to destroy re-births and attain Moksha to praise, salute, worship, and glorify such exalted personages. They should very often pay a visit to them with entreaties and with fruits in their hands with a heart wet with devotion. They should prostrate before them again and again with veneration and humility, with feelings of devotion and awe. Not even Yagnas or Tapas, gifts or Vritas will bestow on one the same benefits as those derivable from the services rendered with feeling and love to these glorious persons who are shining as Jivanmuktas. Service done to these noble souls quickly purifies the heart.'

"Lord Brahma now passing under the false name of Manu, having thus taught Ikshwaku

true love, departed to his celestial abode, Brahmaloka. Ikshwaku acted according to the precepts of Manu, attained the imperishable seat of Moksha and enjoyed the essence of the Bliss of Brahman."

OM Tat Sat !

OM Shanti ! Shanti !! Shanti !!!

Peace be unto all beings !

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